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MARIA THERESA

MARIA THERESA

AFTER A PORTRAIT BY MARTIN VON MEYTENS

MARIA THERESA

BY

MARY MAXWELL MOFFAT

AUTHOR OF "QUEEN LOUISA OF PRUSSIA"

WITH TWENTY ILLUSTRATIONS AND TWO MAPS

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TO

ROBERT MAXWELL MOFFAT

PREFACE

ONLY by keeping in view the essential difference between history and biography is it possible to convey any clear idea of the life of Maria Theresa within the limits of a single volume; for she belongs not only to Austria and Hungary, but to the Empire and to Europe. The standard history of her reign, by Alfred von Arneth, runs to ten quarto volumes. And the word " reign " is so literally interpreted, that the reader is plunged almost at once into her struggle to maintain herself on a throne to which she did not succeed until she was twenty-three. Other historians have given a little more attention to the first period of her existence. Travellers and memoir writers contribute a few facts. But the most trustworthy descriptions of the young Maria Theresa are to be found in diplomatic documents—dispatches sent to their own Governments by ambassadors to the Court of Vienna.

In the later stages of her career, her letters are the best commentary on her life and the fullest revelation of her character. Though brought up on conventional lines, she soon abandoned the stiff epistolary style of her day, and wrote, as she spoke, easily, directly, and forcibly. Through the medium of her letters we may still come into touch with one of the most human and attractive personalities of the eighteenth century. We can listen to her own account of her likes and dislikes, her joys and sorrows, and realize more vividly than would otherwise be possible the peculiar interest of her family relationships. Marriage with her hero was but the beginning of a new chapter in a romance that opens in her childhood, while her later life derives much of its interest from her determination to share her power with her gifted eldest son.[1]

Some overlapping of history is inevitable in the biography of one who gave her name to an historical epoch. In such a connection it is, however, of more importance to obtain a glimpse of international events from the point of view of the contemporary than from that of the present-day critic. For this reason frequent reference has been made to the political cartoons of the period, and two of them are reproduced by way of illustration.

The main narrative has been kept free from details concerning the pedigree of the heroine. But the leading representatives of the Habsburg dynasty and the turning-points of Habsburg history are touched upon in the Genealogical Introduction.

Occasional quotations from authorities on eighteenth-century history have been fully acknowledged in the footnotes. But I am under special obligation to Messrs. Macmillan and Co. for permission to include passages describing the Empress-Queen's administrative and educational reforms from the volumes on *Maria Theresa* and *Joseph II*, by Dr. J. Franck Bright, in the *Foreign Statesmen Series*.

My thanks are due to Dr. Henrik Marczali, Professor of History in the University of Budapest, and to Dr. Rudolf Payer von Thurn, of Vienna, for personal interest in my work and helpful suggestion in its earlier stages. In connection with the very interesting subject of the founding of the Medical School of Vienna, I am indebted to Dr. W. Bulloch of the London Hospital, for guidance to the chief sources of information for the work of Van Swieten, De Haen, and others; and to Dr. R. D. Maxwell for a valuable introduction to the Library of the Royal College of Surgeons. I would also like to take this opportunity of thanking my friend, Miss E. M. Cooper, for a careful revision of the whole manuscript.

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[1] Almost without exception the letters included in the present volume are translated into English for the first time.

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GENEALOGICAL INTRODUCTION

GENEALOGISTS who do not shrink from entering the region of conjecture, maintain that the original ancestors of the House of Austria may be discovered amongst the patrician families of ancient Rome. But attempts to connect with the first Roman Empire the dynasty which played so conspicuous a part in the second or mediæval Roman Empire, are manifestly associated with the theory that the later institution was simply a revival of the earlier one. For those who held this view there was nothing final in the overthrow of the Western Empire in A.D. 476. It was merely in abeyance till that Christmas morning of the year 800 when, in the ancient basilica of St. Peter, Pope Leo III placed an imperial crown on the head of Charlemagne, King of the Franks, and the new monarch was hailed as the successor of the Cæsars.

The Emperor afterwards stated that the action of the Pope had taken him by surprise. But it has been suggested that he would hardly have induced so many of the great nobles and ecclesiastics of his realm to assemble at Rome if he had not expected something out of the common to occur during his sojourn in the city. Looking back, it seems as if the group of temporal magnates must have been strangely incomplete if it did not include a representative of those dukes or counts of Alsace, who were the probable forefathers of the Austrian emperors.

The first undoubted Habsburg ancestor, Guntram, Count of Alsace and of Breisgau, in Northern Helvetia, appears in history about 930. He was surnamed *The Rich*, because of the number of armed followers he had brought to the support of the German king, Henry the Fowler, when that monarch was striving to deliver the south-eastern part of his country from invading Wends and Hungarians. At the present day Henry the Fowler is chiefly known as the king in Wagner's *Lohengrin*. Yet he was no mere legendary character, but a very notable captain of the Teutonic hosts.

A grandson of Guntram, Werner, Bishop of Strasburg, began to build the first cathedral of that city in 1015. The superstructure was destroyed by fire, but on its foundation was erected a portion of the stately minster which is still the glory of Strasburg. Werner also built the fortress on the summit of the Wülpelsberg, that has been described as "the cradle of the Habsburgs." Its one remaining tower may easily be visited by the traveller between Basle and Zurich who turns aside from the main road, or railroad, at Brugg. Even the tourist who passes onward at express speed can scarcely fail to note the commanding position of this eleventh-century stronghold. According to legend, the advantages of its site were discovered by Werner's brother, Radbot, when he was searching for a lost hawk. Hence the fortress was called Habichtsburg (Hawk's Castle). It became the chief residence of Radbot's immediate descendants, who were consequently known as Counts of Habichtsburg. In course of time the name was abbreviated into Habsburg.

Meanwhile the way was being prepared for a transference of Habsburg activity from Western to Central Europe. One of the most famous achievements of Otto the Great, son of Henry the Fowler, was a decisive victory over "the excessively incursive Hungarians."[1] To safeguard the region from further encroachments he founded a mark, that is to say, a march or border state, under the rule of a margrave. This particular state was known in the first instance as the Ostmark, or eastern march. Later on it became Oesterreich, or Austria—the eastern part of the

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[1] Carlyle.

German kingdom. A Bavarian nobleman, Leopold of Babenberg, chosen to be the first margrave, was the founder of a dynasty of border chiefs. They rebuilt the fortress-city which had been the Roman Vindobona, the reputed scene of the cremation of the great Emperor Marcus Aurelius. It now became the Babenberg stronghold of Wien, or Vienna.

Otto the Great was crowned Emperor at Rome in 962. In the course of his reign imperialism entered on a new phase. The theory that any potent European ruler was eligible for the office of emperor began to make way for the idea that "the Empire denoted the sovereignty of Germany and Italy vested in a German prince."[1] Yet the Empire, like the Papacy, was still regarded as a divinely appointed institution. From the time of Otto it was styled the *Holy* Roman Empire.

Though German candidates for the Imperial throne were henceforth favoured by the Electors, there was no absolute disqualification of non-German competitors. In 1256 Richard of Cornwall, brother of the English King Henry III, was chosen Emperor. He was installed as King of the Romans at Aix-la-Chapelle, but returned to England without having received the Imperial crown. During the fifteen years' reign of this absentee monarch the Empire lost all control over the destinies of other countries. In Germany itself the greater nobles extended and consolidated their power, till no future sovereign could do more than simply keep them in check.

Richard's successor was Count Rudolf of Habsburg, a strong feudal chieftain with no lack of ambition, or of determination to gain his ends, and no scruples about employing force if other means failed. But he had also a fair share of reasonableness and common sense. Violence for the mere sake of plunder he could not away with. He reduced to absolute subjection the robber barons of the surrounding region, thereby earning the goodwill of pilgrims and other wayfarers, who did not fail to spread his fame abroad. He protected the Swiss towns from the tyranny of the nobles; and even the mountaineers accepted him for their chief defender, with no thought of a future struggle between their descendants and the Habsburgs of later days. There was never any dearth of men willing to serve under the banner of this Count of Habsburg, with his commanding presence—he was over six feet in height—his record of military achievement, his simple habits, and cheery acceptance of the ups and downs of life.

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[1] Bryce, *Holy Roman Empire.*

Towards the end of the year 1273 Rudolf was besieging the city of Basle, where certain of his kinsfolk had been treacherously massacred. To the camp there came in haste his nephew, Frederick of Hohenzollern, Burggraf of Nuremberg, with the wholly unexpected news of the Count's election to the Imperial throne. The choice was due in part to Rudolf's ability, in part to the unlikelihood of the ruler of a small territory being able to force the Electors to disgorge any of their recent acquisitions. It is peculiarly interesting that the bearer of good tidings to the first Habsburg emperor was an ancestor of the future Electors of Brandenburg and Kings of Prussia.

Against the prospective emperor the citizens of Basle did not prolong resistance. He was therefore able to hurry off to those coronation festivities at Aix, which Schiller describes in his ballad, *Der Graf von Hapsburg*. In order to make the assembly a representative one, the poet introduces all seven Electors, though he was perfectly aware that the Elector of Bohemia was away, nursing his wrath because he had not been chosen emperor himself.

To the north of Austria, and of the now partially developed state of Hungary, two Slavonic kingdoms—Poland and Bohemia—had grown up and accepted the Christian religion. If there had been any desire to confer the Imperial dignity on the most powerful prince of the Empire, the claims of Ottocar, Elector and King of Bohemia, could not have been overridden. Not only in his own country, but also in Austria, Ottocar reigned supreme, for he had married the eldest sister of the Babenberg Duke, Frederick the Warlike, who died in 1246, leaving no male heir to succeed him. Although the Electors hesitated long over their choice of a successor to Richard of Cornwall, Ottocar had no doubt of his ultimate elevation. Great was his chagrin when the less formidable Rudolf was preferred to him.

The Habsburg monarch began his reign with attempts to conciliate his disappointed rival. Ottocar, however, scorned all friendly overtures, declined to take the oath of fealty to the new Emperor, and began to seduce other princes from their allegiance.

At the head of the Imperial army Rudolf besieged Vienna, and eventually forced Ottocar to cede the Austrian provinces to the Empire, and to do homage for Bohemia and Moravia. This was in 1276. Two years later the King of Bohemia again took up arms to recover his lost territories, but he was defeated and slain in the Battle of Marchfeld. His son Wenzel was allowed to retain Bohemia as a fief of the Empire, and Rudolf gained the consent of the Imperial Diet to his claim that the Austrian provinces should henceforward be the permanent possession of himself and his descendants. It was on this wise that he became the founder of the great Austrian state which, from that day to this, has never lacked a Habsburg to rule over it.

Rudolf now felt himself free to make a vigorous effort to restore order in the distracted kingdom of Germany. He undertook long journeys, in the course of which he dispensed justice and enforced the laws which forbade the erection of strongholds not necessary for the safety of the Empire. By his command seventy castles were destroyed in one year. The marauding noble who fell into the Emperor's hands was as sure of the short shrift and long rope as any common bandit. That Rudolf did not meet with more opposition was largely due to the astuteness with which he selected husbands for his six daughters. Whether actuated by transmitted tendencies or not, it will be seen that the later Habsburgs were also fully alive to any advantage which might be gained by matrimonial alliances. From Rudolf his descendants may likewise have inherited the clear mental vision that enabled them to know precisely what they wanted to accomplish in life, and the tenacity of purpose which will move mountains rather than abandon a cherished project.

Rudolf was succeeded, after a brief interval, by his eldest son. Albert I held the reins of government with all the firmness that had characterized his father, but he was devoid of the charm of person and manner whereby Rudolf "had fascinated persons of all ranks as if with a love potion." Overbearing in his behaviour and harsh in his methods, Albert confirmed the other German princes in the feeling of apprehension with which they had begun to regard the new rulers of Austria. This antipathy was shared by the Electors to the third and fourth generation. Not till a hundred and thirty-two years after the death of Albert was it found possible to elect another Habsburg emperor.

During the interval of restricted power the Austrian dukes were seldom idle. Their attempt to substitute territorial possession for the Habsburg protectorate of the Swiss towns and cantons, led to the struggle with which is associated the name of William Tell. Before it was over the Helvetian domains of their forefathers and the cradle of their race were lost to the Habsburgs.

Meanwhile, however, they had contrived to establish their supremacy over another mountainous land—the County of Tyrol. On the strength of this extension of territory Duke Rudolf V of Austria felt justified in assuming the title of Archduke. The highest of all titles was restored to the dynasty in 1438, when there was urgent need of a strong ruler to stem the tide of Turkish invasion. The reign of the third Habsburg emperor, Albert II, was only a matter of months. But the Turks remained an ever-present menace to European liberty. When they had taken Constantinople in 1453, and put an end to the ancient Eastern Empire, the Electors were persuaded that there could be no better policy than to strengthen the hands of the Archduke whose dominions served as a barrier between Central Europe and the Oriental invaders. Henceforward the reigning Habsburg had little difficulty in getting himself elected, and thus becoming *the* Emperor. From 1453 to the days of Napoleon there was no other claimant of Imperial honours in Europe.

The immediate successor of Albert II on the Archducal and Imperial thrones was his cousin, Frederick of Styria. Frederick III, as he was now called, was the first and last of his race to betake himself to Rome for coronation. His Polish mother is sometimes credited with having bequeathed to her descendants the exaggerated "Habsburg lip." If this be so, it is strange that the disfiguring possibilities of the lip should have remained latent for three generations. Frederick himself and his son Maximilian I were men of attractive personal appearance. Maximilian's son was known as Philip the Handsome. It is in the children of Philip and Joanna of Arragon (the Emperors Charles V and Ferdinand I) that the over-development, not only of the lip, but of the whole lower jaw, becomes very manifest.

A flavour of romance lingers about the story of the marriage of Mary of Burgundy to Maximilian I. With other leading incidents in the life of that vigorous and capable monarch, it is duly commemorated in the wonderful series of marble reliefs which adorn his monument in the Franciscan church at Innsbruck. Viewed in the light of after events, it might seem as if the children of that marriage were "sword and fire, red ruin and the breaking up of laws"; for the establishment of Habsburg supremacy in Burgundy marks the beginning of the long rivalry between Austria and France. A more serious obstacle to the expansion of the latter country could not have been devised. To push back its north-eastern frontier became henceforward a fixed object of the policy of the governors of France, whether kings or cardinals. It was a policy which transformed the heritage of the gentle Mary of Burgundy into "the cockpit of Europe."

A portion of her duchy was seized by the French during the minority of her son, the handsome Philip. What remained to him became known as the Spanish Netherlands, for by marriage with Joanna, heiress of Ferdinand and Isabella, Philip of Burgundy became Philip I of Spain. Grief for his death in 1506 developed Joanna's tendency to mental derangement, and she was never more than a titular queen. The sovereignty not only of the Netherlands, but of Spain, with its dependencies of Naples, Sicily, and Sardinia, and with its claim to unbounded supremacy and wealth in the newly discovered Western world, devolved on Joanna's elder son Charles, whose minority ended at sixteen. Three years later (1519) the death of his paternal grandfather, Maximilian I, made him, conjointly with his brother Ferdinand, governor of Austria and the allied states. The Imperial crown was added to the others, and the rich young ruler became the Emperor Charles V. Habsburg power had reached its apex. The quaint vowel motto, which Emperor Frederick III modestly regarded as suitable for Austria—*Austriae est Imperare Orbi Universo*[1]—acquired more significance than at any other epoch.

Habsburg power suffered no diminution when Charles, recognizing the impossibility of one monarch governing the half of Europe, had abandoned Austria and its dependencies to his brother. Rather was it thereby increased, for Ferdinand had married the sister of Louis, King of Hungary and Bohemia, who was killed in battle with the Turks. He left no children, and his brother-in-law was chosen to succeed him. Thus the government of Hungary, Bohemia, and the Austrian provinces came to be vested in a single ruler. On the death of Charles V this ruler became the Emperor Ferdinand I. In addition to his territorial possessions, he transmitted to his descendants a paramount claim to the Imperial dignity.

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[1] There is a German version of the motto—*Alles Erdreich ist Oesterreich Unterthan*—All the world is subject to Austria.

No sooner were the two lines of Habsburg monarchs safely established on their respective thrones, than it became manifest that each desired nothing more fervently than to absorb the dominions of the other. By way of safeguarding claims to inheritance, they intermarried in every generation. In the case of the Spanish Royal Family this policy resulted in physical and mental deterioration. Its last representative was the half-imbecile Charles II.

A similar fate would doubtless have overtaken the Austrian Habsburgs if, as in Spain, the crown had descended in one direct line. It happened, however, that the grandsons of Ferdinand I left no children. They were therefore succeeded by their cousin, Ferdinand II, whose mother and wife were Bavarian princesses.

Though the first of a series of events conducive to the well-being and longevity of the ruling dynasty, the accession of Ferdinand II, in 1619, was in other respects disastrous. It rendered hopeless the attainment of the leading object of the policy of his predecessors—a peaceful settlement of the religious controversies of the times. Nowhere had the Reformation movement advanced more rapidly than in Austria and Bohemia. In Hungary also it was making headway. Ferdinand I made a few concessions to the Protestants. His enlightened son, Maximilian II, granted full religious toleration in his hereditary dominions. With the cessation of strife had come the beginning of a period of prosperity and intellectual vigour. Ferdinand I was one of the many correspondents of Erasmus, of whom he was also to some extent a pupil. For Erasmus had drawn up the plan of education which gave to this particular monarch his unusual knowledge of the Greek writers. His Court became a chosen resort of the scholar and the artist. When Paracelsus had made Basle too hot to hold him, he betook himself to Vienna. He was well received by Ferdinand, to whom he submitted the manuscript of his treatise on surgery. The Emperor realized the value of the work and paid for the printing of it; but he had no belief in the author's possession of alchemical power. "This Paracelsus," said Ferdinand, "is one of the greatest of scholars and most shameless of liars"—a dictum which has never been seriously disputed.

Art and learning met with no less encouragement at the Courts of Maximilian II and his son Rudolf II. The latter gave his name to the *Rodolphine Tables*, compiled at Prague by the Imperial mathematician and astronomer, John Kepler. Scientific men were specially welcome to Rudolf, himself a man of considerable scientific attainments. But it was hardly possible for one so devoted to scholastic pursuits to be at the same time an efficient monarch. Both Rudolf and his brother Matthias were singularly incapable rulers. They withdrew many of the religious privileges which had been granted to the Protestants, and prepared the way for their cousin, Ferdinand II, by whom the influence of the House of Austria was thrown definitely into the scale of the Counter-Reformation. To the Jesuits, by whom he had been educated, Ferdinand gave a free hand in his German provinces, and the extermination of Protestantism and original thought proceeded apace. It was useless to think of reducing the people to submission so long as their aristocratic overlords were in sympathy with the Reformers, therefore in their dealings with the nobility the Jesuit watchword was "Thorough." "The ancient families of Austria, Styria, and Moravia became almost extinct. The really old Austrian names appear no more in history."

With the accession of Ferdinand II is likewise associated the outbreak of the Thirty Years' War. By the time it was over the Empire had become a mere aggregate of independent states under the nominal suzerainty of the Emperor. The terms of the Peace of Westphalia (1648) made it possible for the petty rulers of German principalities to ally themselves with foreign Powers without regard for the interests of the country as a whole. From this circumstance the French monarchy derived untold benefit. In 1648 the reign of Louis XIV, which was to prove its epoch of greatest splendour, had already begun. The exhausted and divided Empire could no longer defend the Imperial states and cities on the left bank of the Rhine. Sooner or later they were certain to be absorbed by France. French ambition also coveted the Spanish Netherlands. Cardinal Mazarin resolved to obtain for his young King the hand of Maria Theresa, eldest daughter of Philip IV, and eventually to claim Spain and its provinces on her behalf, as she had no brothers. True, she would have to go through the form of renouncing all pretension to her father's dominions. That, however, was a promise which future diplomacy or a strong army might render null and void. As it happened the marriage brought no fulfilment of the hope of speedy succession. Philip IV died in 1665. But four years earlier his second wife gave birth to the feeble infant who now became Charles II of Spain.

Needless to say the authorities at Vienna took no dead-letter view of the renunciation of the Queen of France. Charles V's provisions for future contingencies, confirmed by the wills of subsequent rulers of Spain, made it perfectly clear that there had never been any idea of a transference of the crown to another dynasty while a male Habsburg of either branch remained alive to inherit it. Emperor Leopold I had no intention of foregoing his rights. He would fain have prevented the French King's annexations on the left bank of the Rhine, but two long struggles with the Turks and an intervening rising in Hungary taxed the resources of the Emperor to the utmost. If his enemies showed signs of waning hostility, emissaries of France stirred them up with promises of assistance. To keep Leopold busy in Eastern Europe was an important plank in the policy of Louis XIV.

But that which chiefly favoured his designs was his ability to rely on the inaction of England during the reigns of Charles II and James II. The latter clung obstinately to his neutrality, in spite of urgent appeals for help from his son-in-law, William of Orange, who had no illusions as to what might happen if the barrier of the Spanish Netherlands were no longer between Holland and France. William's accession to the throne of England in 1689 was a serious set-back to the ambition of Louis XIV. For England became the champion of the balance of power at the very time when the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes and the laying waste of the Rhine Palatinate had united Germany, and indeed the greater part of Europe, against France. Failure attended the various schemes for the restoration of James II and the overthrow of English sea-power. Consequently Louis reverted to his early project of securing the Spanish monarchy for the House of Bourbon.

There was no longer any doubt that the throne of that monarchy would soon be vacant. To be free for operations as soon as Charles II had breathed his last, Louis concluded the Peace of Ryswick with Britain, Spain, Holland, and finally with the Empire. He restored some of his conquests, including Lorraine, which had been occupied by the French since 1690. Duke Leopold of Lorraine was nearly related to the Emperor,[1] so Louis took the precaution of marrying him to a French princess. She was the daughter of the King's brother, the Duke of Orleans, and the celebrated "Lise-Lotte" of the Palatinate.

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[1] The mother of the Duke of Lorraine was a half-sister of the Emperor Leopold.

MARIA THERESA

CHAPTER I

THE MAKESHIFT HEIRESS

ON May 13th, 1717, the citizens of Vienna were astir long before dawn. Not a few of them, indeed, had been keeping watch all night beneath the walls of the Hofburg. This unpretending series of buildings had been erected from time to time to meet the needs of divers generations of Habsburgs. It was now the town residence of the Emperor Charles VI.

Late on the previous evening it had become known in the city that the Imperial household was awaiting the arrival of no less a personage than an heir to the throne. Six months had passed since the death of the little Archduke Leopold, hitherto the only child of the Emperor and his consort, Elizabeth Christina of Brunswick. The birth of a second prince would, it was hoped, go far to console them for the loss which had thrown so deep a shadow over Court and capital.

In those days of mourning there chanced to arrive in Vienna a newly appointed British envoy to the Porte—Edward Wortley Montagu by name. He was accompanied by his wife, the famous Lady Mary Wortley Montagu. Travellers of such diplomatic importance found ready access to their Imperial Majesties. Lady Mary promptly fell in love with the Empress, whom she describes to one of her correspondents as "the most beautiful queen upon earth." Apparently the attraction was mutual, for the Ambassadress goes on to say, "I took leave of Her Majesty the day before

I left Vienna, and she began to speak to me with so much grief and tenderness of the death of the young prince that I had much ado to withhold my tears. You know that I am not at all partial to people for their titles, but I own that I love that charming princess. And, if I did not, I should have been very much moved at the tragical end of an only son, born after being so long desired, and at last killed by the want of good management, weaning him in the middle of the winter."

The death of one infant, the birth of another, and all that hinged on these occurrences, was doubtless discussed at length by the townspeople, who waited patiently in the growing light of the May morning. Their desire to be as near as possible to the scene of events could hardly be ascribed to affection for their extremely unemotional ruler. It was rather a demonstration of loyalty to the House of Habsburg, and of satisfaction at the prospect of its continuance. The welfare of the chief town of the Archduchy of Austria had come to depend on its retention of the rank of Imperial capital. It was natural, therefore, that the Viennese should view with apprehension any possibility of a break in the long line of Habsburg archdukes. Since the Reformation no Catholic prince, save Louis XIV, had been powerful enough to dispute their claims to the throne of Charlemagne. On the death of an emperor, the Electors met at Frankfort-on-the-Main, ostensibly to choose his successor. The result of their deliberations was, however, a foregone conclusion.

Since Charles was the sole male representative of his dynasty, it would have been vain for any one to suggest that, in the year of grace 1717, anxiety about the succession was premature. It would be granted that there was no apparent reason why His Majesty, aged thirty-two, should not live many years, and leave more than one son to safeguard the Habsburg interests. But then would follow a reminder that, not long ago, the same thing might have been said about his elder brother, Joseph I. Yet Joseph was only thirty-three when he died of smallpox. Who could tell that Charles might not be the next victim of a disease which was certainly no respecter of persons? Many a one too poor to pay for medical treatment recovered from its attack, whereas all the skill of the Court physicians had failed to save the late Emperor, although they had guarded him from every breath of injurious outdoor air, and kept him carefully swathed in "twenty yards of English scarlet broadcloth."[1]

Reference to Joseph's illness was apt to give rise to dispute. There were those who maintained that the course of the disease had not indicated a fatal termination. A current rumour ascribed the Emperor's death to poison, administered by the Jesuits, with whom he was constantly at variance. But there were also upholders of the theory that he had been born under a particularly unlucky star. To its malign influence all the misfortunes of his life might be attributed, beginning with the horrors which took place during his childhood, when the Turks invaded the country and, in the summer of 1683, laid siege to Vienna. The general terror and confusion, and the dangers to which Joseph's father, Leopold I, and his family were exposed during their flight to Linz, made a deep impression on the boy's mind. His own reign did not begin until two-and-twenty years later, but one of his first proposals was a scheme for commemorating the relief of Vienna by the Duke of Lorraine, and John Sobieski, King of Poland. The guns abandoned by the vanquished Turks were to be melted down. The metal thus obtained was to serve for the casting of a gigantic bell, destined to hang in the tower of St. Stephen's Cathedral.

The plan was duly carried out. But when the sound of the great bell was heard for the first time, Joseph's successor was making his state entry into the capital. Nearly eight years had elapsed since Charles, then a youth of eighteen, had set out for Spain with the intention of making good his claim to the crown of that country. He had perforce returned without it—had with difficulty, it was said, escaped from Barcelona in order to receive the Imperial crown which had so unexpectedly fallen vacant.

Since the accession of Charles there had been fewer pretexts for merrymaking than was at all agreeable to the pleasure-loving Viennese. The forthcoming celebrations were therefore looked forward to with eagerness. There is reason to believe that the anticipated announcement might have been made at an earlier hour of the morning than half-past seven. It was the signal for the firing of cannon and the ringing of the many bells of Vienna. From all the region round about, people flocked into the city, and there was no lack of the outward and visible signs of rejoicing. But of genuine satisfaction there was not a trace. That which every one had refused to consider possible had come to pass. Instead of the wished-for archduke, a little archduchess had made her appearance on the scene.

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[1] A curious foreshadowing of modern experiments in the treatment of small-pox by red *light*.

If the people were disappointed, the Emperor was still more so. As pawns in the great game of politics, princesses could sometimes be used effectively. But it was disconcerting to have a pawn substituted for a possible king. A dispatch from the Venetian envoy, Grimani, to his Government indicates that those whom it behoved to congratulate Charles were at a loss to know what to say. "In the hearts of the Emperor and his subjects," writes Grimani, "grief and hope have been striving for the mastery. Now it would puzzle me to tell whether we are celebrating the birth of this princess or continuing the mourning for her brother, who was looked upon as one of Heaven's best gifts. However, I went with Monseigneur the Papal Nuncio to felicitate His Majesty according to custom, *and to express the wish that the ensuing year might bring him more perfect consolation*. He received us with his usual courtesy, but it was clearly to be seen that he would have been better pleased to be the father of a prince."[1]

Charles was very ready to assume that the fulfilment of his cherished hope was merely deferred. Still, the temporary situation made it needful for him to take a great many precautions. Until the coming of the prince, who would set matters right, his daughter must be regarded as a sort of makeshift heiress of the Habsburg dominions, and treated with the honour due to her position.

Accordingly the Emperor and his relatives proceeded in state to the crowded cathedral, where a specially arranged *Te Deum* was sung to the accompaniment of a full orchestra.

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[1] Grimani's Dispatches. Archives, Vienna.

CHARLES VI

FROM A PORTRAIT BY AUERBACH IN THE IMPERIAL ART MUSEUM, VIENNA

Charles had the true Habsburg love of music. If for once it failed to afford him the wonted pleasure, that, in the circumstances, was not surprising.

On the evening of the same day the christening of the new-born infant took place. The chapel of the Hofburg was too small for so important a ceremony. A temporary chapel was therefore arranged in the more commodious *Rittersaal.* By eight o'clock the Hall of the Knights had been completely transformed. The light of many candles shone on costly tapestries which concealed the usual bareness of the walls. A musicians' gallery had been extemporized. Upon the altar were famous relics, which may still be seen in the Treasury of the Hofburg. To the water in the jewelled font had been added " five drops from the River Jordan."

Drums and trumpets gave the signal for a stately procession to pass into the Hall. Knights, privy councillors, and military officers were the first to enter. After them came Spinola, the Papal Nuncio, accompanied by the observant Grimani; then the Emperor himself, in his gorgeous state apparel, followed by the two Dowager Empresses, his mother, the widow of Leopold I, and his sister-in-law, the widow of Joseph I. Next in order appeared Prince Liechtenstein, the Lord Great Chamberlain, carrying on a cushion the tiny candidate for baptism. On either side of him walked a Knight of the Golden Fleece. Behind him came Countess Thurn, the newly appointed official Governess; then the daughters of Leopold and Joseph, giving place for the first time to the daughter of the reigning monarch. Other notabilities followed in their train.

Then the service began, the Prince-Bishop of Vienna taking the chief part. The infant was transferred from the charge of Prince Liechtenstein to that of Countess Thurn, until it was time to hand her to her sponsors. These were the Pope, represented by Spinola, her grandmother, Eleonora of Neuburg, and Amelia of Brunswick, the widow of Joseph. When the ceremony was over and the little Princess was carried back to her mother's apartments, she had received the names of Maria Theresa Walburga Amelia Christina. " So many names for one poor child," but four of them were promptly discarded for the time being. During her girlhood she was known simply as the Archduchess Theresa.

From her sponsors she received the usual gifts of costly relics and jewels, but no accession of strength or helpfulness. The papal sponsorship was a formal distinction. Her grandmother was nearing the end of a life of "violent devotion, a perpetual performance of extraordinary acts of penance without having done anything to deserve them."[1] As for the Empress Amelia, she was not likely to show herself sympathetic to the girl who must needs be preferred to her own daughters. Had the welfare of the new-comer been dependent on her avowed sponsors, her outlook would have been poor indeed. But other influences were at work on her behalf. Almost it would appear as if those who had become chiefly answerable for her future were the near and distant ancestors from whom she had also received gifts—gifts of unusual variety and of infinite worth to one who had to find her way along untried and rugged paths, and who would seem at times to be set as a mark for all the arrows of outrageous fortune.

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[1] Lady Mary Wortley Montagu.

CHAPTER II

CHARLES VI AND ELIZABETH CHRISTINA OF BRUNSWICK

"A SOLEMN little Herr in red stockings" is Carlyle's description of the Emperor Leopold I, paternal grandfather of Archduchess Theresa. Scarlet stockings with black hose, doublet, and mantle was the ordinary garb of the Spanish grandee, and Leopold had as many ties with Spain as with Austria. His mother was the Infanta who at one time seemed likely to become Queen of England by marriage with the first Charles of the Stuart dynasty. When, in 1700, the last Habsburg king of Spain died without issue, Leopold claimed to succeed him as next of kin. But agents of the Emperor's cousin and lifelong rival, Louis XIV, had been working to purpose at Madrid. They had persuaded the deceased monarch, the feeble-minded Charles II, to set aside the will of his father in favour of the Habsburgs of Austria, and to bequeath his throne to Philip of Anjou, grandson of the King of France.

Louis' acceptance of the succession for the Prince who, as Philip V, became the founder of the Bourbon dynasty of Spain, destroyed the balance of power in Europe, and menaced the peace and commerce of Britain and the very existence of Holland. As a safeguard of independence the Dutch had the right to occupy a line of forts on the southern frontier of the Spanish Netherlands. But in the crisis of 1700 the French King claimed the Low Countries on behalf of his grandson, and sent troops of his own to oust the garrisons from the barrier fortresses. Equally aggressive was his attitude towards Britain. English exports were prohibited in Spanish territories, and the son of

James II was acknowledged by Louis as James III, King of Great Britain and Ireland.

England and Holland were therefore constrained to take up arms on the side of the Emperor. He had already begun the War of the Spanish Succession by sending Prince Eugene across the Alps to drive the French out of Northern Italy. The success of this move simplified Leopold's efforts to induce the reigning princes of Germany to join his Grand Alliance. The victories of the combined British and Dutch fleets determined the Portuguese to transfer their support from the Bourbon cause to that of the Allies. Thereupon Leopold made over his rights to the Spanish crown to his second son Charles. In 1703 the young Archduke set out for Lisbon by way of Germany, Holland, and England. At Windsor he was entertained by Queen Anne. He had assumed the title of Charles III of Spain, but his actual kingdom never extended much beyond the limits of Catalonia. With one exception,[1] the brilliant victories of the Allies were not gained in the Peninsula, but in Germany and the Spanish Netherlands, and were due to the military genius of Marlborough and Prince Eugene.

Emperor Leopold died in the midst of the strife (1705). It had shown no signs of abating in 1711, when Joseph I succumbed to physicians and "English scarlet broadcloth." But, when the Austrian pretender became the Emperor Charles VI, the Allies, who had been moving heaven and earth to exclude a Bourbon cadet from the Spanish throne, decided that it was futile to continue a war which might end in making the Habsburg monarch more dangerous than his rival.

In somewhat precipitate fashion they sheathed their swords and there began the general scramble for advantages, which history calls the Treaty of Utrecht and German wit the Treaty of Unrecht. Thereby Philip V was left in possession of Spain and the Spanish colonies. Austria acquired the Duchy of Milan as well as Sardinia (afterwards exchanged for Sicily). There was also transferred to the

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[1] The capture of Barcelona by Lord Peterborough. In this city the Habsburg claimant of the Spanish throne held his Court.

Emperor all that remained of the Spanish Netherlands, which thus became the Austrian Netherlands. This arrangement gave Holland her desired bulwark against France, and saddled Austria with a white elephant of a dependency in place of the object of Imperial desire, namely, the annexation of Bavaria. The British gains included Gibraltar, Minorca, and a promise of freedom from commercial restrictions in Spanish countries.

Though obliged by the dissolution of the Grand Alliance to abandon the reality of a kingdom in Spain, Charles ceased not to irritate the Bourbons by "hanging on to the title with notable obstinacy."[1] They were likewise aggrieved by his retention of the Grand Mastership of the Order of the Golden Fleece. To this, however, his acquisition of the Low Countries, where the order was first instituted, gave a shadow of justification.

The Emperor's consolation prize, the foothold in Italy, was one of the advantages which he had chiefly coveted. But the Netherlands, in lieu of Bavaria, was a bitter pill to swallow. Charles reflected gloomily on what might have been if Austria had had the foresight to make the first move, if he, and not the French pretender, had arrived in Spain in 1701, and if the over-hasty Philip had not married Marie Louise of Savoy the very same year. It was 1708 before the authorities at Vienna, having selected a bride for Charles, sent her to join him in Spain. Meanwhile the birth of Philip's eldest son had made the Bourbon cause more popular than ever.

When Charles at last received the wife who had been married to him by proxy, he had the grace to admit that he had been fortunate beyond his deserts. A conventional royal alliance was all he had looked for. He left Vienna with the understanding that he was to marry a Portuguese princess, but she died before his arrival in Lisbon. Shortly afterwards he formed an irregular connection with the beautiful Marianna Pignatelli, afterwards Countess Althan. But at head-quarters the search for a legal wife was continued. Charles professed himself willing to entertain the idea of a union with the clever, good-looking Caroline of Anspach, who ultimately became Queen of England. With her large ambitions and slender resources, Caroline must have been sorely tempted to comply with the one condition of marriage into the Imperial family. Very much to her credit was the refusal to abjure her Protestantism for personal advancement.

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[1] Carlyle.

Caroline's decision was, at the time, the subject of much comment. At the Lutheran Court of Brunswick-Wolfenbüttel, the wife of the Hereditary Prince sought to improve the occasion by remarking to her pretty fourteen-year-old daughter, " Lisabethchen, I hope you would have been as true to your confirmation vow as Princess Caroline. If you are ever tempted to change your religion, you must also remember to obey God rather than man."

The words were probably uttered with some apprehension of coming events. The wife of the Emperor Joseph I was a Hanoverian princess.[1] Her relationship to the Wolfenbüttel branch of the House of Brunswick made it not unlikely that reports would reach Vienna of the girlish loveliness and charming disposition of Princess Elizabeth Christina. In her family circle the latter kept her pet name of Lisabethchen, though inclined to be a tall rather than a " little " Lizzie.

Whether or not the Hereditary Princess was prepared to hear that her eldest daughter had been suggested as a wife for the Habsburg king of Spain, she was certainly surprised and dismayed to realize that her father-in-law, the reigning Duke, had agreed to consider the project.

Antony Ulric of Brunswick-Wolfenbüttel was a somewhat curious character to find on a ducal throne. He was not without ability or culture or piety—all of the superficial order. Sentimental romance and sentimental religious poetry flowed from his pen with equal readiness. But when the writer of ecstatic hymns had to deal with matters affecting his personal advantage or that of his family, his chosen counsellor was Mr. Worldly Wiseman. He was not a little perturbed by the likelihood of the duchy passing to his brother's sons. His own heir had nothing but daughters, three in number. The old Duke determined that the brilliant marriage proposed for the eldest should not be lightly declined.

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[1] In her case there was no difficulty about religion. The Empress Amelia was brought up in the Church of Rome, which her father had joined from conviction.

Like another ancient individual, Antony Ulric had "strange power of speech." He talked to his son until he extorted a reluctant consent to the scheme. Then he summoned his granddaughter and talked to her. To his surprise, his eloquence failed to convince her offhand that, if looked at from the right point of view, Catholicism and Lutheranism are seen to be different names for the same thing. Lisabethchen's mother was reproached by letter for "great imprudence" in making it possible for the child to doubt the force of his arguments. Evidently she must remain with her grandfather for a time. The letter concludes with the pious hope that "the Lord may make our Lisabethchen another Joseph, for whose sake the divine blessing and protection may be upon our House. Farewell, then, future Grandmother of Emperors!"

Even with the girl entirely under his influence it took more persuasion than the old Duke had anticipated to induce her to consent to his wishes. Lisabethchen seemed to him like a child refusing a necessary dose of medicine. Grandfather would show her how easily it could be taken. They would both become Catholics. And so the matter ended. The public "conversion" was soon an accomplished fact, and Princess Elizabeth Christina was welcomed to Vienna and the circle of her future relations.

Nine years later, when her beauty had attained its full maturity, Lady Mary Wortley Montagu was moved to write an enthusiastic description of Elizabeth of Brunswick. It can scarcely be exaggerated, seeing that other writers have borne similar testimony to the fascination of this Princess, though they had not Lady Mary's skill in portrayal. "I was," she writes, "perfectly charmed with the Empress. I cannot, however, tell you that her features are regular. Her eyes are not large, but have a lively look, full of sweetness, her complexion the finest I ever saw, her nose and forehead well made, but her mouth has ten thousand charms that touch the soul. When she smiles, 'tis with a beauty and sweetness that force admiration. She has a vast quantity of fine fair hair; but then, her person—one must speak of it poetically, to do it rigid justice. All that the poets have said of the mien of Juno, the air of Venus, come not up to the truth. The Graces move with her. The famous statue of Medicis was not formed with more delicate proportions. Nothing can be added to the beauty of her neck and hands. Till I saw them, I did not believe there were any hands in the world so perfect, and I was almost sorry that my rank here did not permit me to kiss them. But they are kissed sufficiently."

A chronicler, who saw Elizabeth shortly before her betrothal, comments on her look of childlike innocence. For innocence and ethereal beauty the Court at Barcelona and the sordid Spanish Succession War were a strange background, and Charles himself a somewhat strange mate. He was only twenty-three, but his knowledge of life was considerable. Though a more imposing personage than his father Leopold, he was neither very tall nor very well-proportioned. During the reign of Queen Anne the print-sellers made her subjects familiar with the features of the Archduke for whom the great Marlborough was waging war. The author of *Gulliver's Travels* evidently had these portraits in mind when he described the Emperor of Lilliput. "His features were strong and masculine, with an Austrian lip and arched nose, his complexion olive, his countenance erect . . . and his deportment majestic." In Charles the Habsburg lip was so pronounced as to interfere with the clearness of his speech, yet he could not be described as unprepossessing. He had accustomed himself without much difficulty to the preternatural gravity and ceremoniousness of a Spanish monarch. His air of apathy and inscrutability served him as a convenient mask. Once only was it completely thrown aside. The bewildering experience of being perfectly charmed by his own wife took Charles right out of himself. To Duke Antony Ulric he wrote: "Heartily loved Herr Grandfather,—Although on all sides I was told beforehand of the exceptional beauty and remarkable qualities of my angelic queen and consort (who is winning all hearts), yet now, when I have seen her, all that seems to me like a shadow which has vanished in the full sunlight. Words fail me to tell of my exceeding happiness and satisfaction. I shall be eternally grateful

ELIZABETH CHRISTINA OF BRUNSWICK-WOLFENBÜTTEL

to you for making it possible that this angel should become my queen. I only wish she had a consort worthy of her merits, but I will do my best to be to her a faithful husband. The treasure which has been committed to me shall be carefully guarded."

This letter shows Charles at his high-water mark, and should be remembered to his credit. His idea of a faithful husband did not include breaking off his relations with Countess Althan, but there is no suggestion of any subsequent mistress. Elizabeth, on her part, became attached to her husband and resigned to the excessive formality of her existence. In a restricted sort of way her character developed. When Charles sailed from Spain to assume the Imperial crown, he announced to the Catalans that he had given them the most precious pledge for his speedy reappearance in leaving his consort behind as regent. It was certainly not his own fault that he never returned. He made vigorous preparations for carrying on the war. It was to no purpose. His allies had determined to abandon Spain to Philip V. An English squadron was sent to convey the Emperor's troops to Italy. When the Empress was taken on board one of the ships, "respect for a princess to whom they were sincerely attached alone prevented the Catalans from opposing the embarkation."

Unaffected by the departure of the auxiliaries, Barcelona held out against the Bourbon army for many months. "The history of the eighteenth century furnishes no other example of a siege so long and bloody." The city was nearly reduced to ashes before it was taken in 1714. It is not therefore surprising that Bourbon kings have never been popular in Barcelona.

CHAPTER III

THE CHILDHOOD OF MARIA THERESA

ON her arrival in Vienna the young Empress found her consort preoccupied with a document, which had just been drawn up at his instigation. It was to some extent identical with the family compact which was Leopold I's contribution towards the settlement of the Austrian succession. Two amendments had, however, been introduced by Charles. Endowed with more political acumen than many of his predecessors, he perceived that the right of Habsburg rulers to divide their territories, giving to one son Styria, to another Tyrol and so forth, had been a source of weakness to the monarchy as a whole. It might even be used as a pretext by some future combination of European Powers, desirous to parcel out the dependencies of Austria, as they had already parcelled out those of Spain. The latest act of settlement was therefore made to assert, with peculiar emphasis, the indivisibility of the hereditary possessions of the Habsburgs.

The other alteration effected by Charles VI had to do with the order of succession. It had always been recognized that, in the absence of male heirs, the dynasty might be continued in the female line. And Leopold I had decreed that if his sons, Joseph and Charles, died without male issue, the daughters of Joseph were to succeed to the throne in the order of primogeniture. In the event of their death without children, their rights were to pass to the daughters of Charles. " At that time, however, the existence of two separate branches of the family had been contemplated, Joseph's at Vienna, that of Charles at Madrid, whereas since then Charles had succeeded to the whole Habsburg heritage and so might fairly claim that the case was altered."[1] Consequently he reversed the original order of succession and gave the prior claim to his own daughters. In 1713 they were non-existent daughters, and the change was a mere matter of phraseology. Yet it was precisely this stipulation which was destined to make all Europe hear enough, and more than enough, of "the Imperial bit of sheepskin."[2]

For several years the Emperor's privy councillors and near relations were almost the only persons who had definite knowledge of the provisions of the new act of settlement. To the Empress Elizabeth it must often have seemed a veritable instrument of torture. Her husband had a lively imagination for future disasters arising from his lack of direct heirs. As time went on he showed increasing proneness to dwell upon the subject till he was reduced to the lowest depths of despondency. The son, "born after being so long desired," was regarded by his parents with peculiar intensity of affection, and there was an element of despair in their grief for his loss. Not all their subsequent partiality for their daughter Theresa could entirely stifle regret that the healthy, vigorous child had not been a prince. This was especially the case when their third infant proved to be another daughter, the Archduchess Marianne.

As for Theresa herself, she probably realized at a very early age that fate had dealt unkindly with her in not making her a boy. In a Court swarming with officials, many of them with no definite duties and strongly addicted to gossip, the nursery tends to become a forcing-house. Such it proved to the little Archduchess. Those responsible for her upbringing directed their first efforts to checking her natural restlessness and impulsiveness. They do not seem to have given heed to the early development of her mental faculties. So Theresa was suffered to overhear stories of princes and princesses who had the disadvantage of belonging to real life and figuring in questionable situations. She heard her brother's death diversely accounted for. One theory associated it with blameworthy treatment of his foster-mother by the autocrat of the nursery.

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[1] C. T. Atkinson, *A History of Germany*, 1715-1815, p. 79.

[2] Carlyle.

Theresa's own future was a favourite subject of speculation; and, by way of variety, there were gruesome tales of ghosts, witches, and demons. It was a strange medley for a child's mind to work upon, and Theresa's mind worked incessantly, especially on occasions when the hard-and-fast rules of Court etiquette made silence and stillness imperative. At such times she became, to outward view, the quaint, demure little maiden represented in her portrait at the age of three. In this, her gown of blue and silver brocade trimmed with gold lace is a miniature reproduction of the garment of the fashionable Viennese lady, "a dress very inconvenient,"[1] long in the skirt, excessively long in the waist, and with wide hanging sleeves. Her fair hair is cut short and smoothed away behind her ears, leaving fully exposed a forehead both broad and high, which overweights the chubby under-part of the face. The posture is stiff and unchildlike. The figure might almost be that of a marionette, if it were not for the wide-awake grey eyes.

If such a posture were maintained for any length of time, Theresa might well be described as a "little mouse." For it was doubtless as applied to herself that she became familiar with a term of endearment, somewhat indiscriminately used by her in after days. She soon learned to comport herself with a good imitation of Imperial dignity, though her tendency to act on impulse was never entirely eradicated, and her Governess was kept in a state of apprehension lest it should manifest itself at some untoward moment. Never would she forget the day when, for the first time, the six-year-old Archduchess was taken to a window to watch the passing of the Corpus Christi procession. All went well until the Emperor appeared. Hitherto Theresa had only seen her father in the black hose and doublet and red stockings of ordinary wear. Delighted beyond measure with the magnificence of his state array, she clapped her tiny hands, and exclaimed in tones which could not fail to reach his ears, "Oh, what a fine papa! Come here, papa, and let me admire you."

The crowd was hugely diverted, though neither then nor at any other time, was Charles seen to smile in public. Yet

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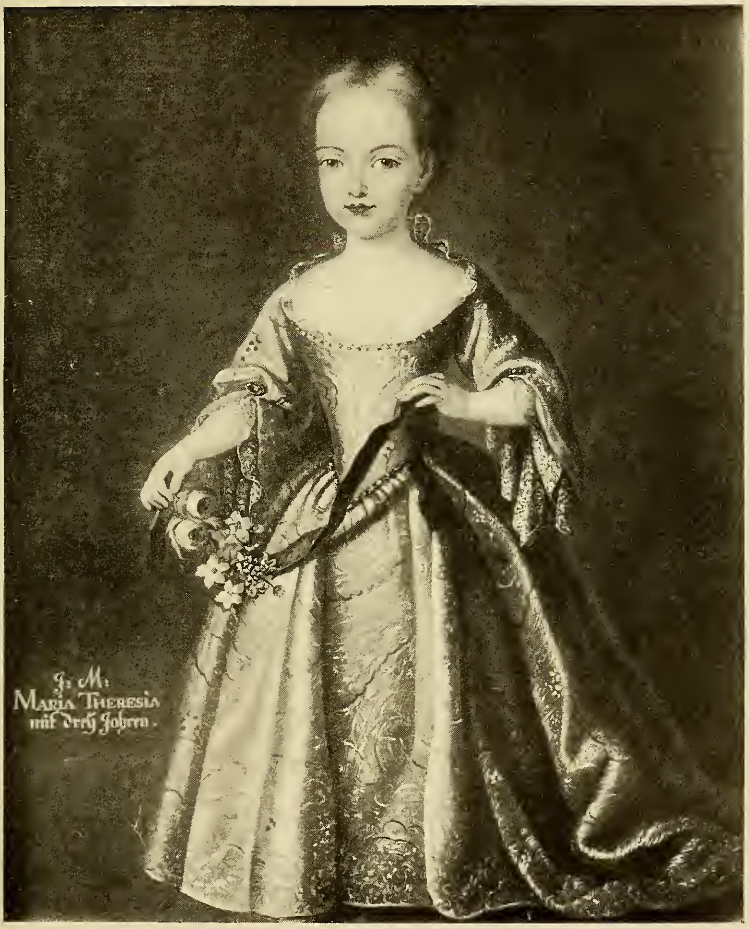
[1] Lady Mary Wortley Montagu.



MARIA THERESA AT THE AGE OF THREE

FROM A PORTRAIT IN THE HOFBURG, VIENNA

if he had no sense of humour, he was capable of deep feeling. There was no doubt of his sympathy with Duke Leopold of Lorraine, who lost his eldest son, Clement, just about the time of that Corpus Christi festival of the year 1723. The Duke could claim cousinship with the Imperial family, and had been the chief friend of the Emperor's boyhood. But it was not solely on this account that Charles grieved for the untimely death of the youth whom he had never seen. Although he had been careful not to admit it, he had come to look upon Clement as the future husband of his daughter Theresa. Everything, apparently, was in the Prince's favour. Current report testified to his attractive appearance, his mental ability and his pleasant unassuming manner. His uncle, the Duke of Orleans, was Regent of France. But as Clement had shown no undue partiality for his Bourbon relatives, his connection with the hereditary enemy of Austria would probably be overlooked. To the multitude he would be the popular grandson of the Duke of Lorraine, who had come to the rescue of Vienna in 1683.

After much hesitation the Emperor was brought to the point of inviting the Prince to complete his education at the Imperial Court. In the midst of the preparations for his reception came the news that Clement had been taken ill. A few days later it was known that smallpox had claimed another victim.

From this time forward the marriage of the Emperor's elder daughter becomes a question of European interest. Leopold of Lorraine saw no reason why his second son, Francis Stephen, should not now be regarded as the prospective husband of the Archduchess. Then everything could proceed as before. The plan found favour with Prince Eugene and other influential advisers of the Emperor, and they induced him to sanction the proposal that Francis should continue his studies in Vienna. As to the future, Charles refused to commit himself in any way. He had heard that Francis was more French than German in his likings, that he was not inclined to take things seriously. It was also a drawback that he had not had smallpox! The Emperor was willing to grant that a lad of fourteen might develop every desirable quality, but—some other alliance might prove more advantageous than a union with the House of Lorraine.

Since Francis was to be received merely on approval, it was of the utmost importance that he should commend himself to the Imperial family. His father, by word of mouth, and Prince Eugene, by letter, set vigorously to work to coach him for his part. In the presence of His Majesty, the Prince must restrain his natural liveliness. He must never take part in conversation unless expressly invited to do so. He must betake himself diligently to study. Above all, he must study the Emperor.

The advocates of the marriage were confident that there would be only one interpretation of the presence of the Prince at the Austrian Court. Charles, for his part, persisted in believing that it is possible for a monarch to take decisive steps and cunningly conceal the traces thereof. His reception of Francis of Lorraine was characteristic of the whole course of their relationship. The latter was to be lodged in a wing of the Hofburg—a wholly unexpected distinction; yet every one must pretend that there was nothing out of the common in his arrival. As a result of much contrivance, Francis was casually presented to the Emperor when the latter was on a shooting expedition in Bohemia. After that, what captious individual could say it was not perfectly natural that the young traveller should be invited to accompany his relative to Prague? There the Court had assembled for the ceremonies connected with Charles's coronation. Hitherto he had been satisfied with the rights and title of king of Bohemia, but, in 1723, political expediency suggested that he should receive the crown with all due formality. It is said that he was also influenced by a legend that no male heirs were born to unanointed, uncrowned Bohemian monarchs. Be that as it may, Charles took care to make it evident that he already had an heiress, who might one day be queen of the country. Archduchess Theresa had accompanied her parents to Prague; and, for the first time, a certain prominence was given to her appearances in public.

It would be interesting to come upon some record of the first meeting between the boy of fourteen and the girl of six whom, in spite of her many suitors, he did eventually marry. At Prague they could do little more than take stock of each other. And when the Court was preparing to return to Vienna, Francis contracted some slight ailment and had to be left behind. Later on, he made his way into the Imperial capital with a lack of observation quite in accordance with the Emperor's sense of the fitness of things. His Majesty was still contemplating the possibility of other marriages for his elder daughter. Nevertheless, he received Francis with marked kindness, and gave much careful consideration to the selection of the men who were to be the guardians and associates of the inexperienced youth. To his own Lord Marshal, Count John Caspar Cobenzel, Charles confided the office of Master of the Household of the Hereditary Prince of Lorraine. Baron von Neipperg,[1] a military officer much esteemed by Prince Eugene, was to be the companion and friendly adviser of His Serene Highness. His tutors were Baron Pfütschner and Langer, an authority on legal subjects.

Francis of Lorraine had none of the qualities of the student. At the same time, he had no lack of intelligence, nor of capacity to reach a fairly high level of general attainment. All that was needed was a tutor with some originality and force of character, who could interest him in subjects of study and help him to overcome his mental laziness. That neither Langer nor Pfütschner was the man to achieve this was very soon evident to the Duke of Lorraine, who had no illusions with regard to his Heir-Apparent. When Francis expressed entire satisfaction with his tutors, Duke Leopold wrote to Cobenzel, urging that the boy should be more firmly taken in hand. He expostulated with Francis himself, justly deploring his son's inability to write a decent letter, his want of political and legal knowledge, and his excessive love of pleasure, especially the pleasure of the chase. Finding that little attention was paid to his communications, the philosophic Leopold ceased to remonstrate. Overmuch condemnation of hunting would be indiscreet. It was the Emperor's favourite diversion. If His Majesty chose to be accompanied by Francis, was it altogether a matter for regret? Was not the Prince fulfilling, with more success than had been anticipated, the purpose for which he had been sent to Vienna? His reception had indicated that he might be kept very much in the background. That was no longer a possibility. The handsome, well-grown youth, with his light-hearted, happy disposition and ingratiating manner, was soon on the best of terms with the whole Imperial household. He had the skill to adapt himself to the Emperor's moods, and could entertain His Majesty without overstepping the bounds of ceremonious observance. When Charles was absent, the Prince was only too willing to give the rein to the vivacity and volubility which delighted the Empress Elizabeth and her circle. The two little Archduchesses looked up to him with all the admiration of children for a good-natured elder brother. And when the gossip of the Court reached their ears, the younger sister was probably sorry that he could not marry them both.

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[1] He was the grandfather of Count Neipperg, who became the second husband of Marie Louise of Austria, widow of Napoleon Bonaparte.

Soon after his arrival in Vienna there was renewed expectation of the birth of an infant, who might perchance be the wished-for heir. Since 1720 Charles had lost no opportunity of interviewing the accredited representatives of his scattered domains. He had resolved to secure from each individual state the acceptance of his Act of Succession, and a promise of help to enforce it in case of need. This self-imposed task was not a congenial one, and Charles was overjoyed to think that he might presently be in a position to abandon it. A religious man according to his lights, he became more assiduous than ever in his attendance at Church services, and gave heed to those who suggested vows, masses, and pilgrimages as a means of obtaining his heart's desire. As things fell out, he was only preparing for himself an increase of disappointment. The experience of former years was repeated. From 1724 to 1730 a third little princess (Maria Amelia) had her place in the Imperial nursery and in her father's schemes for matrimonial alliances. Then her short life came to an end, and no other child followed her into the world. This, however, could not be foreseen in 1724. Charles never abandoned his hope of a son, but he admitted the need of being prepared for sudden emergencies, and the act which established his eldest daughter's right to the succession, in default of male issue, was made known to the world (December 6th, 1724). Seeing that the business of which it took cognizance concerned the House of Habsburg and not the Empire as a whole, it had been possible for the Emperor to decide it without reference to the Diet. It was therefore known as a Pragmatic Sanction. That the term had been used to describe former papal, imperial, and royal decrees was forgotten in the notoriety attained by the edict of Charles VI. It became *the* Pragmatic Sanction of history.

When he had done all that in him lay to secure for this instrument the united support of his own subjects, Charles was still unsatisfied. He had persuaded himself that it must needs be accepted and if possible guaranteed by all the rulers of Europe, including the German potentates. Henceforward his appearances on the political stage are more suggestive of an indefatigable collector with a subscription list than a Roman emperor; only instead of receiving contributions along with the signatures, he makes endless concessions in order to obtain them. In vain did his wisest counsellor, Prince Eugene, protest against sacrifices for which there could be no adequate return, and reiterate his own conviction that "the Pragmatic Sanction could only be guaranteed by a full treasury and two-hundred thousand fighting men." Charles was not to be turned aside from his pursuit of shadowy advantages, although it ofttimes involved neglect of the real interests of his empire.

Another kind of guarantee to which he attributed importance was a formal renunciation of all claim to the succession by each of his brother's daughters before her marriage was allowed to take place. The Emperor's elder niece, Maria Josepha, became the wife of the Hereditary Prince of Saxony. Her younger sister, Maria Amelia, was married to the Elector of Bavaria.

It is characteristic of the man, who spent his days in evolving elaborate schemes for the safeguarding of his daughter's inheritance, that he did absolutely nothing to prepare her for the responsibilities of a great position. "The Future in its purpose vast paused, waiting her supreme commands"; but her father refused to turn and resolutely face the Future. To do so would have seemed to him nothing short of treason to his expected son and heir.

When, therefore, Archduchess Theresa was promoted from the nursery to the schoolroom, she merely received the sort of education which was deemed sufficient for a princess who, like her sister Marianne, could not hold higher rank than that of consort of some reigning sovereign. Given the opportunity, she would probably have taken kindly to those studies in legal and political science for which Francis of Lorraine showed so little aptitude. History—the nearest approximation to such subjects—was the lesson to which she looked forward with greatest eagerness. But perhaps the fact that Spannagel, the history professor, was one of the more competent of her teachers, had something to do with this preference. Ancient history she read to him in Latin. And since Latin was the official language of Hungary, she learned to speak it with considerable facility. Her letters testify to her ability to express herself freely and fluently in French and German, and she could also read and converse in Spanish and Italian. Beyond all doubt the Habsburg ancestors of the Archduchess had transmitted to her their gift of speaking with tongues. Seeing that she likewise inherited their love of music, it was no small advantage to inhabit the musical capital of Europe. With Caldara, a composer of eminence and choirmaster of the Imperial chapel, for a teacher, the pupil who had no fear of hard work came to be something more than an amateur musician. Her graceful dancing was due to the lessons of another expert, Lavassori, the ballet master of the Opera House. Geography and mathematics are also referred to before the list of Theresa's secular acquirements comes to an end. Though mentioned last, religious teaching had a prominent place in the curriculum. Her instructor was Father Francis Vogel, of the Society of Jesus.

She was happy in having a sister who delighted to be her comrade and fellow-student. And both girls had a helpful friend in their Governess, Countess von Fuchs. Intercourse with this discreetly appointed guardian, and with the mother to whom they were strongly attached, was an important element in the education of the Emperor's daughters. To this they owed their charm of manner and some fostering of the finer potentialities of their nature. Theresa had also to thank her mother for whatever knowledge she possessed in youth of the trend of policy in the various countries of Europe, and the general condition of things in the lands which she might one day be called upon to govern.

The sweeping condemnation of Viennese women by Lady Mary Wortley Montagu is evidently intended to be taken with a grain of salt. In her lively epistles to Pope and other friends they figure as dull, uninteresting creatures. If they are remarkable for anything it is for "the natural ugliness with which God Almighty has seen fit to endow them all generally." Their ridiculous style of hairdressing made their heads "too large to go into a moderate tub." Their whaleboned petticoats "covered some acres of ground." As a matter of course each of these sirens had two cavaliers dancing attendance on her—her husband and his proxy. Pope, in reply, surmises that Vienna is situated in "a free region of adultery." "It is inhabited by all nations," says Lady Mary in more thoughtful mood, as she noted the varied racial characteristics of the men and women crowded into the circumscribed area of the fortified city. Representatives of Eastern and Western civilization elbowed each other in the narrow streets. Eastern and Western ideas with regard to morality, occult science, and divers other subjects jostled one another in the minds of the citizens. Still, there is no reason to infer that, in the early eighteenth century, Cæsar's wife was the only woman in Vienna whose character was above suspicion, or the only mother who desired that her children should learn to distinguish clearly between right and wrong.

The city which was the resort of all nations afforded exceptional opportunities for the exercise of linguistic accomplishments. French fashions and the French language were at a discount at the Court of the traditional enemy of the Bourbon kings. But French was the native speech of the Prince of Lorraine, and this was reason enough for Theresa's rapid mastery of its idioms. Francis, on his part, made gallant attempts to express himself in German. Yet, though most of his life was spent in Austria, he never came to feel at home in the language of the country. His spasmodic efforts to overcome its difficulties resulted in such confusion of tongues that, according to a contemporary, "his French letters seemed to have been written by a German, while his German correspondence might have been dictated by a Frenchman with a meagre knowledge of foreign languages."

France was the birthplace and the French Court the school of the man whose fame sheds greatest lustre on the reigns of Charles VI and his immediate predecessors. By origin he also belonged to Italy, and by choice to the Empire. This cosmopolitan connection he acknowledged by signing his name in three languages—Eugenio von Savoye. As a younger son and an undersized, delicate child he was, in the estimation of his relatives, clearly marked out for an ecclesiastical career. Family influence gained him a benefice and the title of Abbé when he was but seven years old, and though his heart was set on becoming a soldier, tutors did their best to educate him for the priesthood. Eugene had no distaste for learning, but to him it was primarily the means of access to books on military science and the histories of the great warriors of Greece and Rome. Unremitting attention to physical exercise overcame the tendency to weak health, albeit he remained small in stature and hopelessly unattractive in feature, save for a pair of exceptionally keen dark eyes. Persons whose motives would not bear close scrutiny learned to evade his penetrating glance. It is said to have been at the root of Louis XIV's dislike of "the little Abbé" and refusal to let him follow his own bent. Vowing vengeance on France, Eugene betook himself to Vienna and volunteered for service in the Imperial army. From Leopold I he received the commission he coveted, and as captain of a regiment of dragoons he served under Charles of Lorraine in a series of campaigns against the Moslem invaders of Hungary. A chance to distinguish himself was all that Eugene asked of Fate. With phenomenal rapidity he won his way to the rank of general. When, in 1697, the Turks again became actively hostile, Eugene was appointed to command the forces sent to oppose them. By his victory at Zenta he crippled their military power for years to come, and forced them to evacuate most of the provinces which they had filched away from Hungary. When the name of the successful commander was in every one's mouth, it occurred to Louis XIV to offer him a marshal's baton if he would return to France.

The proposal, which took for granted that Eugene was a mere adventurer, was rejected with scorn. "The little Abbé," as he continued to be called by the soldiers who idolized him, had sworn never to re-enter French territory save with a drawn sword in his hand. The War of the Spanish Succession gave him the opportunity of showing that he was no utterer of random threats. The story of his achievements in that war must have been very familiar to the Emperor's daughters. More recent still were the glorious days of 1716 and 1717 when, in two pitched battles, Eugene annihilated the armies of the Sultan and drove the Turks from their last foothold in Hungary. An Austrian writer suggests that the victory at Belgrade might be regarded as Eugene's christening gift to Archduchess Theresa. That she was specially interested in the hero who had made her birth-year so illustrious goes without saying, though, like other people, she may have been somewhat taken aback by a first glimpse of *Prinz Eugen, der edle Ritter*. Even those who knew he was so diminutive, that his armour seemed as if it had been made for a boy, were hardly prepared for the oddity of his appearance. Fortunately Theresa learned betimes the unwisdom of judging by outward show.

During the intervals of peace Eugene, in his double capacity of Commander-in-Chief and President of the Council of War, was often to be seen at the Hofburg. But he was a man of varied interests, who spent no more time at Court than was absolutely necessary. He was not therefore likely to come much in contact with the Emperor's daughter, although the problem of her future cost him many an anxious thought.

The future position of Archduchess Theresa was also a subject of peculiar interest to Eugene's old friend and companion-in-arms, Count John Palffy. A patriot from his youth up was this Hungarian nobleman. Born in 1663, the first twenty years of his life fall within the period of Hungary's wellnigh hopeless struggle for independent existence. In the east the insatiable Turk was establishing himself on her territory, seizing her sons and daughters in thousands and selling them for slaves. In the west, the autocrats at Vienna were doing their utmost to reduce the ancient Magyar kingdom to the position of an Austrian province. One after another the Habsburg rulers failed to redeem their promises of religious toleration and of government in accordance with the time-honoured laws of the Hungarians. The people, goaded to resistance, made frequent and desperate efforts to free their country from its twofold bondage. Through the baldest narrative of their achievements the glow of their fiery patriotism may still be felt. The pity of it that so much courage and self-devotion should have been mainly associated with isolated movements, and doomed to end in the expatriation, imprisonment, or death of a multitude of heroes!

The Palffy family were patriots of an equally fervent but more cautious type. They represented those of their countrymen who held that the deliverance of Hungary could not be brought about on independent lines. Either the Emperor or the Sultan must espouse her cause. Of the two oppressors, the Sultan was obviously the more to be dreaded. It behoved them, therefore, to shake off his yoke as expeditiously as possible. With this end in view John Palffy found scope for his energies by taking part in Charles of Lorraine's crusade against the Turks. In his case, as in that of his friend, Eugene of Savoy, promotion was not delayed.

Three successive emperors were served by him with a fidelity which never wavered, and as time went on he had the satisfaction of realizing that he had done wisely in taking his stand on the side of the Habsburgs. In Joseph I the Hungarians at last had a king who manifested a conciliatory spirit in his dealings with them. As for Charles VI,[1] it was of the essence of his policy to maintain a good understanding with the Hungarians. Their support was essential to his scheme of guaranteeing the Pragmatic Sanction. By the terms of this instrument the relations between Hungary and Austria were more clearly stated than in any previous document. The two countries were declared inseparable, and the ruler of both was always to be one and the same person—a male or female Habsburg in the regular order of succession. In other respects, however, Hungary was to be independent. She was to be governed by her own Diet and her own laws. The Austro-Hungarian monarchy had come definitely into existence (1723).

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[1] As King of Hungary he was Charles III.

On weighing the advantages of these transactions with the Emperor, Magyar patriots found that the balance still dipped too heavily on the side of Austria. But they were content to bide their time for further concessions. The next king would be either a minor or a woman.[1] In neither case was there the least likelihood of a peaceful accession, and in the general upheaval Hungary might easily discover an opportunity of readjusting the political scales.

As the years passed by, bringing no addition to the Imperial family, every one but Charles himself came to look upon Archduchess Theresa as the future head of the monarchy. Amongst the first to discern the latent possibilities of her nature was Count Palffy. His services to the State were rewarded by many proofs of His Majesty's confidence and favour. Moreover, he had the opportunity of winning the affection of the girl who seemed destined to wear the crown of Hungary. To her he was simply "Father Palffy—one of my friends." "Grandfather" would have been as fitting a title, for the Count was her senior by more than half a century. Few friendships have had more important results than that between the young Princess and the elderly nobleman who stands out as "one of the grandest figures in the more recent history of Hungary."[2]

Theresa was nearly twelve years old when the death of Duke Leopold of Lorraine[3] made it incumbent upon the Hereditary Prince to proceed to Nancy for his installation as successor to the dukedom. Six years had been spent by Francis in intimate association with the Imperial household, and he had endeared himself to every member of it. Theresa had all along regarded him with proprietary interest, and was devoted to her prince. She was tall for her age—a pretty, fair-haired girl, whose resemblance to her mother was sufficient assurance of no ordinary degree of attractiveness in days to come. For personal, no less than for political reasons, Francis would fain have had some pledge of the more permanent relationship, which had been the object of his father's ambition. He lingered over his preparations for leaving Vienna. It was to no purpose. The Emperor was as gracious as ever. In his non-committal way he mumbled something resembling an invitation to return to Austria when the young Duke had accomplished his mission. Otherwise he was suffered to go as he had come, with no suggestion of the formal betrothal which would have set so many minds at rest.

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[1] The Salic law had hitherto prevailed in Hungary. To evade the difficulty of acknowledging a female sovereign, she was to be referred to as *king* in the official Latin language.

[2] Arneth, *Maria Theresia*, Vol. I, p. 257

[3] March, 1729.

With his departure Theresa's childhood comes to an end. She had not been ignorant of her father's schemes for bestowing her hand on this or that candidate, from the political point of view perhaps more desirable than Francis. Yet so long as he was, so to speak, the suitor in possession, it had never seemed possible that his claim would actually be set aside. But who could tell what might happen during an absence which was likely to be prolonged? His new title was Duke of Lorraine and Bar. The latter duchy was a fief of the French Crown, and Francis would therefore be under the necessity of going to Paris to do homage to Louis XV. More time would be taken up with visits to other European capitals. The return of the Prince seemed very remote, and Theresa felt very forlorn, though her mother and sister did their best to console and encourage her.

The most persistent opponent of the Lorraine marriage was Elizabeth Farnese, second wife of Philip V of Spain. An unscrupulous, ambitious woman, her chief end in life was to secure positions of eminence for her sons. Small chance had any of them of succeeding to the throne of Spain. The prior claim belonged to their half-brother, Don Ferdinand, the offspring of Philip's former marriage. Unlike his Habsburg predecessors, this Bourbon king had no convenient appanages in the Low Countries and in Italy to bestow upon the younger members of his family. The loss of the Italian States was particularly galling to Elizabeth, herself a princess of Parma. She was ready to seize any pretext, and even to risk another war, if Naples could be regained and become the heritage of her eldest son, Don Carlos. To begin with, she resolved to leave no stone unturned to secure for him the Duchies of Parma and Piacenza. The first step was to procure the co-operation of the Emperor. It was a disagreeable necessity and might end in a rebuff, for Charles held that the Imperial claims on Italy were still valid. But Elizabeth reflected that he had other axes to grind. It was not improbable that they might be able to strike a bargain.

As a result of negotiations, the rivals of the Spanish Succession War got rid of some of their outstanding causes of dissension. Charles renounced his pretensions to the crown of Spain, and apparently assented to the proposal with regard to the reversion of the Italian duchies when their childless rulers should have departed this life. Philip in return undertook to support the Pragmatic Sanction and the Ostend East India Company, a promising commercial enterprise in which Charles was keenly interested. This was in 1725. But the acknowledged Treaty of Vienna was supplemented by secret articles, which provided for the marriage of two of the Emperor's daughters to Don Carlos and Don Philip, the sons of Philip V and Elizabeth Farnese.

The secret soon leaked out, and the champions of the balance of power rushed to arms. There was an outbreak of hostilities between England and Spain, which threatened to develop into a general European war. As it happened, not one of the conflicting Powers was prepared for a lengthy struggle—not even Austria, though Charles VI had contrived to detach the King of Prussia from his alliance with Hanover and win him over to the Imperial side. It was therefore possible for the advocates of peace, Fleury in France and Walpole in England, to combine their efforts and bring the war to an end at an early stage. As a preliminary to the peace negotiations the Austro-Spanish matrimonial scheme had perforce to be abandoned. The Emperor assumed his most aggrieved attitude, and professed inability to understand why his action had been called in question. What if he had promised two of his three daughters to Spain? He had never meant that the eldest should be one of the two—an explanation hardly calculated to soothe the infuriated Elizabeth Farnese. A congress of representatives of the Great Powers met at Soissons to determine the provisions of the treaty of peace, known as the Second Treaty of Vienna. It was not ready for signature till 1731. But the question of Theresa's betrothal to Don Carlos was practically settled in the negative before Francis of Lorraine left the Austrian Court.

During the year which followed his departure, an equally distasteful proposal kept the young Archduchess in a most unwholesome state of tension.

The alliance of Austria and Prussia was the outcome of much double-dealing on the part of Charles VI and Count Seckendorf, his wily ambassador at Berlin. In true Mephistophelean fashion, Seckendorf set himself to win the favour of Frederick William I, beguiling him with promises of Imperial friendship and of Imperial help in making good his claim to the Duchies of Jülich and Berg in North-western Germany, albeit the Emperor had already undertaken to uphold the claim of the Elector Palatine to the selfsame duchies. In return for such illusory advantages, the King was induced to sign away his prospects of peace and happiness, so far at least as this world was concerned. The Treaty of Wüsterhausen (1726), which pledged the King and Emperor to mutual support and protection, had a sinister influence on the fortunes of the Prussian Royal Family. It involved the repudiation of a wellnigh completed treaty between Frederick William and his father-in-law, George I of England, who was also Elector of Hanover. This latter contract was designed to cement the union of Prussia, Hanover, and the Maritime Powers, by the marriage of the Prussian Crown Prince and his sister Wilhelmina to the eldest daughter and son of the Prince of Wales and that very Caroline of Anspach who had refused to sell her Protestant birthright for an Imperial title. As things fell out, it was most unfortunate that the Queen of Prussia should have set her heart on the double marriage. She declined to see any finality in the alliance with Austria, and made repeated efforts to induce her brother, when he became George II, to enter into fresh negotiations. But her endeavours to outmanœuvre Seckendorf had no result, save that her unfortunate son and daughter became involved in her intrigues, and had to bear the brunt of their father's frenzied hatred of amateur diplomacy.

Had things been left to take their course, Frederick William would have had a better chance of discovering Seckendorf's relationship to the father of lies. Even as it was, the Count had much ado to prevent his victim from becoming restive in the absence of any definite pronouncement with regard to Jülich and Berg. There was also the question of the Crown Prince's marriage. His Majesty wanted to know whom the Emperor intended to propose as a substitute for the cousin who had lately become Princess Royal of England. The tempter opined that the Prince had only to turn Catholic in order to qualify for the hand of an archduchess, of *the* Archduchess, in fact. For, in spite of his trafficking with Spain, Charles VI was undoubtedly reserving his eldest daughter for marriage with a prince of the Empire.

The departure of the Duke of Lorraine gave colour to the idea of the Crown Prince of Prussia as the favoured candidate. That Charles ever contemplated such a union is scarcely conceivable. But so long as the rumour served a diplomatic purpose he refrained from contradicting it. Even the members of his own family were left in the dark as to his ultimate intentions. The Empress, full of sympathy for her daughter, constituted herself advocate-in-chief of the absent Francis, but she had no assurance of having made any impression on her husband. Under the strain of anxiety Theresa's health began to give way. Enthusiastic biographers would have their readers believe that, when the Duke of Lorraine returned to Vienna in 1732, the fifteen-year-old Archduchess was already strikingly beautiful. The dispatches of the ambassadors of those days tell a very different tale. Until she was over seventeen these lynx-eyed reporters only saw an overgrown, anæmic girl, who looked as if she might develop consumption. It would have been strange if her health had not suffered, considering how she was kept on tenterhooks by her father's indecision and obstinate determination to weigh the claims of every matrimonial candidate however unsuitable.

The unhappy Prince of Prussia was only one of the series, and he eventually became an object of pity rather than dread. Driven by his father's brutality to the fatal step of trying to escape from the country, he was arrested and imprisoned. His companion in flight was beheaded before his eyes, and he himself was condemned to death.

The Emperor was ready to welcome any plausible pretext that might extricate him from the imbroglio at Berlin; but he was shocked beyond measure at the form in which the solution of the problem had come. He determined to make an effort to stay the execution of the savage justice of Frederick William, who had decreed that his son should share the fate of other deserters from the Prussian Army. There was no time to lose. Bartenstein, the Secretary of the Cabinet, and Starhemberg, the Finance Minister, were commissioned to draft an Imperial remonstrance, "and being retired, both of them, into a closet, they drew the letter which was written immediately in the Emperor's own hand, and was dispatched that same evening." By the time it reached the grim soldier-king his wrath had begun to cool and he was willing to admit Charles' plea that the Crown Prince belonged not only to Prussia, but to the Empire, and that he could not therefore be put to death with so little formality. A proposal that the unfortunate youth should be liberated and restored to favour was likewise taken in good part. Before long the two monarchs were again in communication on the subject of the Prince's marriage. His name was no longer coupled with that of any archduchess. It was decided that his consort must be a Protestant. But Charles still hankered after a matrimonial bond between the reigning families of Austria and Prussia—something that might give the House of Habsburg a peculiar claim to Prussian support in time of need. His nominee was a young relative and namesake of the Empress—Princess Elizabeth Christina of Brunswick-Bevern. He was gratified when Frederick William declared himself ready to accept her as a daughter-in-law.

After the long period of suspense Theresa once more breathed freely. When it was whispered that Francis was certainly returning to Vienna her spirits began to recover. But the question as to what might have happened if she had been married to Frederick the Great is almost as interesting as the speculative results of a Napoleonic victory at Waterloo.

As for Charles VI, he viewed the issue of events in Prussia with the utmost complacency, and took credit to himself as a master of statecraft. Assuming that he had effected a permanent alliance with Frederick William and established a claim to the undying gratitude of the Crown Prince, he had pleasing visions of the best disciplined army in Europe enforcing Habsburg claims for a couple of generations at least. And all this had been achieved without doing violence to his daughter's feelings.

CHAPTER IV

FRANCIS OF LORRAINE ON HIS TRAVELS

HAD Theresa but known it, the Duke of Lorraine's absence from Austria at this juncture was as favourable to his cause as his presence had been in years gone by. It was one thing for Charles to dally with the idea of other matrimonial relationships when Francis was at his side, occupying, so far as companionship went, the place of his dead son. It was a very different thing to contemplate a final rupture of the tie which bound him to the young Prince when separation had proved it to be unexpectedly strong. Until Francis had time to regulate his affairs and make his will paramount in Lorraine, it would manifestly be inexpedient to unsettle him. But Charles began to consider by what devious way the Duke might ultimately be brought back to Vienna. Meanwhile he took care to keep himself fully informed of what was taking place on the farther side of the Rhine. Great was his satisfaction to discover that responsibility, together with a quickened sense of being still on probation, was having a stimulating effect on the easy-going Francis.

The late Duke of Lorraine was frequently referred to as "Leopold the Good." "The good-natured" would have been a more apposite description of that pleasure-loving philosopher. But lax government was at an end when his son took hold of the reins. Disregarding every temptation to self-indulgence, Francis applied himself to business with most unwonted vigour. Nothing was decided without due reflection; and when he set to work to augment the revenues of the duchy he made it uncomfortably evident to some people that he possessed a considerable talent for finance. Every detail of expenditure was carefully scrutinized. Sinecures were abolished and unprofitable hangers-on at Court were got rid of. That he made enemies by the score gave him little concern. He did not mean to spend overmuch time in Lorraine, and he aspired to a position which involved the command of great resources. He reflected that it would not injure him with the Emperor when it became known that at the miniature French Court of Lunéville he was disliked, not merely on account of his pecuniary retrenchments, but because in tastes, dress, and demeanour he had become altogether German.

Only during his brief sojourn at Versailles did he appear in the attire of a Frenchman, and exhibit all the charm of manner which usually characterized him. At the same time he made it quite clear that it was not the Duke of Lorraine, the possible son-in-law of His Imperial Majesty, who had come to do homage for the Duchy of Bar. As one travelling incognito and almost unattended, he knelt before his second cousin, Louis XV, who obligingly curtailed the ceremony as far as possible.

When Francis had been sixteen months in Lorraine it was rumoured that he would presently set out for Brussels to visit a sister of Charles VI, who nominally governed the Austrian Netherlands. His subsequent intentions were not divulged. When, however, it became known that a regent was to be appointed, and that the departing Duke was taking away quantities of jewels and other valuables, as well as a good round sum of money, nobody doubted that his ultimate destination was Vienna. Once married to the Emperor's daughter, it was unlikely that he would ever retrace his steps. So far as he was personally concerned, his forthcoming absence gave rise to little regret. What rankled in the minds of his subjects was the certainty that in future Austria would reap all the benefit of the economic prosperity of the duchy. Even the members of his family were secretly relieved to see the last of their dictatorial relative. His mother had greatly desired that her younger son, Charles Alexander, should be the representative of the absentee ruler. But Francis thought otherwise, and insisted that she herself should resume the position she had occupied for some months after her husband's death. And she was not mollified to discover that, as compared with her former term of office, her power as regent was to be largely curtailed.

Francis probably regarded as a necessary evil the policy which had caused him to ride rough-shod over the aspirations and prejudices of his fellow-countrymen. Subsequent events revealed the strength of his attachment to the inheritance which had come down to him from his forefathers. And since arrogance and lack of sociability were alien to his nature, they were doubtless assumed as a means of intimidating those who would otherwise have opposed the introduction of unpopular changes.

A fresh chapter of life opened before him when, in the spring of 1731, he crossed the frontier of Lorraine and began his journey northward. At Luxemburg he found General von Neipperg ready to resume attendance upon him at the Emperor's request. Francis had no expectation of an immediate summons to Vienna, and willingly gave in to His Majesty's wish that the visit to Flanders should be followed by an extensive tour in Holland, England, and various German states. It was enough for him that he was to travel under Imperial auspices. No such honour would have fallen to his share had Charles been averse from the inevitable inference.

In London and the Hague the Duke was the guest of the Austrian ambassadors. To some extent he was an ambassador himself. The rupture between Spain and the Empire had determined Elizabeth Farnese to seek from the Maritime Powers that guarantee of her son's succession to the Italian duchies which the Emperor was no longer minded to accord. The British Government lent a favourable ear to her proposals. Her enmity had an untoward effect on the trade between England and the West Indies, for no effort was made to control the action of the colonial governors of Philip V. Despite the declaration of peace, they continued the lucrative practice of licensing privateers, nominally to protect the seaboards of the countries under Spanish rule. But they winked at the privateers' abuse of the right to search vessels suspected of smuggling, and at their frequent failure to confine their operations to Spanish waters. Seafaring men, returning to England from America and the Indies, told gruesome stories of the plundering of

British ships and the maltreatment of British sailors. Beneath the exaggeration to which such tales are liable there was a considerable substratum of truth. And the friction between the rival Powers was likely enough to lead to some fresh outbreak of hostility before the dilatory Congress at Soissons had agreed to the terms of the formal treaty of peace.

It was therefore resolved to steal a march on the Congress. Lord Chesterfield, the British envoy at the Hague, maintained that "a previous and separate accommodation with Spain was infinitely preferable to a general one with Spain and the Emperor." This agreement took shape at the Treaty of Seville (Nov., 1729). English trade to Spain and the Indies was to resume the footing it had occupied before the war. The Spanish Government made no reference to the vexed question of a restoration of Gibraltar. In return for these concessions, England and her allies undertook to secure the succession of Don Carlos in Parma and Piacenza, and to overcome Imperial repugnance to the dispatch of Spanish garrisons to these principalities.

A further result of this treaty was the position of isolation in which the Emperor found himself. His indignation was natural. But the "Termagant of Spain" cared little for his threats of vengeance; she had gained her point, and Charles soon ceased to interfere with her projects. He had been left with no alternative but a return to the time-honoured policy of alliance between Austria and the Maritime Powers. The preliminary negotiations were carried on at the Hague. Chiefly through the influence of Lord Chesterfield, the Emperor was enabled to add England and Holland to the list of supporters of the Pragmatic Sanction. The price of their adhesion was a threefold concession. Against his better judgment, Charles undertook to suppress the Ostend East India Company—always an object of jealousy to British and Dutch traders. He promised that his heiress should not marry a Bourbon or any other prince powerful enough to upset the political equilibrium of Europe. Finally he consented to the establishment of a Spanish dynasty in Italy (March, 1731). A few months later the son of Philip V. and Elizabeth Farnese was the reigning Duke of Parma and Piacenza.

Although the business part of the transaction was safely accomplished, something still remained to be done. After so long a period of estrangement between the Emperor and his allies, it seemed advisable for him to send a special representative to visit the Courts of Northern Europe and induce the rulers of the several countries to take a personal interest in the welfare of the Habsburgs. To entrust a mission of this kind to the Duke of Lorraine was tantamount to an intimation of his forthcoming betrothal to Archduchess Theresa. But Charles was verging on a resolution to raise no further objections to the marriage, and acquaintance with other countries would be a distinct advantage to his son-in-law. As already stated, Francis was entirely satisfied with the part assigned to him. It was congenial, and he set himself to play it with zest. Away went the mask of chilling reserve through which he had held communication with his subjects. The lively, debonair prince of former days reappeared, attracting those with whom he came in contact, not only by the comeliness of his person, but by his affability and his interest in everything and everybody.

He arrived at the Hague prepossessed in favour of the British Ambassador. Ere long he was hand-in-glove with that brilliant, versatile, fastidious nobleman. Those who held converse with Francis speedily discovered that anything of the nature of occult science had for him an irresistible fascination. By accident or design, he came to know that Chesterfield was a Freemason. His questions gave the latter an opportunity of defending the fraternity from the gross charges frequently brought against it, and of representing Masonic institutions in so favourable a light that Francis declared his intention of joining the craft forthwith.

Chesterfield undertook the necessary arrangements for his initiation. A deputation was sent to the Hague by the Grand Lodge of England, and Francis was duly accepted as an "entered Prentice and Fellow-craftsman." Amongst those present at the ceremony were Dr. Desaguliers, Master Mason; John Stanhope, Warden and brother of the British Ambassador; and the Ambassador himself, Philip Stanhope, Earl of Chesterfield.

This was a noteworthy event, inasmuch as Francis was the first reigning prince to become a Freemason. A few weeks later, "Brother Lorrain coming to England, Grand Master Lovell formed an Occasional Lodge at Sir Robert Walpole's House of Houghton in Norfolk, and made Brother Lorrain and Brother Thomas Pelham, Duke of Newcastle, Master Masons (Nov. 2nd, 1731). And ever since, both in the Grand Lodge and in particular Lodges, the Fraternity joyfully remember His Royal Highness in the proper manner."[1]

The papal decrees against Freemasonry are of later date than 1731. Catholic historians are therefore hardly justified in their denunciation of the attitude of Francis of Lorraine towards the brotherhood. Apparently he did not regret his association with it. In Austria, Tuscany, and wherever his influence extended, he encouraged and protected his fellow-craftsmen. He was the moving spirit in the formation of the first Vienna Lodge—that of "the Three Fires"—and was its Grand Master at the time of his death.

Francis was ten weeks in England (Oct. 14th to Dec. 21st, 1731)—and it must be admitted that he made the most of his time. With Neipperg, Count Kinsky (the Austrian Ambassador), and "Brother" Thomas Pelham, Duke of Newcastle, in attendance, His Highness was here, there, and everywhere, visiting, sight-seeing, or travelling from morning to night. Whole days were spent by him in the circle of the Royal Family. With George II and the Prince of Wales he went hunting in Richmond Park or Windsor Forest, returning with them afterwards to Hampton Court. At dinner his seat was on the King's right hand. The evening was spent in Queen Caroline's apartments, where Francis joined in the popular card game of quadrille, with Her Majesty as partner, or enjoyed further opportunities of speech with King George, or was entertained by the Prince of Wales and his sisters. Kinsky's dispatches[2] assure the Emperor that Their Majesties are delighted with the Duke, that more than once they had expressed the wish that everything possible should be done to make his sojourn agreeable. There was something very taking about the young Francis, with his ready smile, his courteous bearing, his dexterity as a sportsman, and his graceful carriage, especially when he appeared on horseback. But he might have been a good deal less of a Prince Charming, and yet have received an equally gracious welcome. His friendly reception was first and foremost a tacit expression of approval of the Emperor's supposed choice of a son-in-law who was unlikely to upset the balance of power. It was, moreover, the outcome of a desire to honour the future consort of the greatest heiress in Europe—a prince who would probably succeed to the Imperial throne if the other Electors were as well disposed towards him as George of Hanover.

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[1] James Anderson, *The New Book of Constitutions of the Antient and Honourable Fraternity of Free and Accepted Masons*, 1738.

[2] Archives, Vienna.

Where the King led the way, the great nobles and Ministers of the Crown naturally followed. At their town houses and country houses Francis was entertained in princely fashion, and introduced to a society which had little in common with that to which he was accustomed. Records of Viennese Court life in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth century convey the impression of intolerable dulness. In spite of the numerous, well-attended religious services, it is difficult to avoid the conviction that the only deity worshipped with fervour was the great goddess Etiquette. Compliance with her behests made the lives of the emperors of this period absolutely unnatural. "The opinion that it was below them to converse with the rest of mankind" was the only reason that Lady Mary Montagu could assign for "their fondness for pieces of deformity" in the shape of dwarfs. "Not to be quite alone," the Imperial overlords were "forced to seek their companions among the refuse of human nature." Thus Charles VI and his consort found relaxation in the chatter of "two little monsters, as ugly as devils, especially the female, but all bedaubed with diamonds. These creatures were the only part of the Court privileged to talk freely to His Majesty." By his subjects in general the Emperor was regarded with excessive veneration, and was approached, like an Eastern potentate, with repeated genuflections.

In striking contrast to all this was the position of the Hanoverian King, hedged about by no divinity, and with half the people in the country questioning his right to reign at all. But the violently partisan society, with its divided

FRANCIS OF LORRAINE

AFTER A PORTRAIT BY RICHARDSON

loyalty, its political, literary, and social feuds, its squibs, lampoons, and caricatures, was at least varied and pulsating with life. It was chiefly the finer aspects of that life—its stateliness, dignity, and intellectual activity—that were revealed to Francis of Lorraine. He examines the art treasures of the Duke of Devonshire. He accompanies the Duke of Grafton to Cambridge and sees "everything that was curious there." His interest in chemical experiments attracts him to a meeting of the Royal Society, and he is made a member of that learned body. *The Gentleman's Magazine* records his appearances at both Houses of Parliament, at the Courts of Justice, the East India House and, as befitted a budding financier, at the Royal Exchange. Kinsky, who troubled himself little about the spelling of British proper names, tells of an expedition to "Wulitch" Arsenal, where Francis was received by the Duke of "Argaille," and honoured with a salute of eighty guns. Time was also found for impromptu exploits. On November 9th the Duke set off with Frederick Prince of Wales for an incognito visit to the city. Securing seats at a window, they watched the Lord Mayor's Show and the proceedings of the crowd. On December 21st Francis took leave of the Royal Family and his many English friends, and at "Grinwitch" embarked for Holland. The following evening he was in Rotterdam.

That the Duke's visit to England had accomplished its purpose is evident from a letter written by George II to his recently departed guest. "Nothing," says His Majesty, "could have given me greater satisfaction than your sojourn in this country. I prize the opportunity of becoming acquainted with your worth, and I am certain that your kind heart will bear witness to the sincerity with which I assure you of my perfect esteem and constant friendship."

In Holland Francis confirmed the favourable impression which he had already made on the Dutch Government. Before he left the Hague he received full information concerning a mission to which Charles VI attributed even more importance than the one which had just been fulfilled. The King of Prussia was in poor health. His illness was largely the result of excitement associated with his unreasonable attitude towards his son. He was unusually irritable and inclined to be jealous of the Emperor's new-formed friendship with George II. It was therefore proposed by Prince Eugene that the Duke's visit to England should be followed by a visit to Brandenburg. It might not be easy to allay the suspicions of Frederick William and rivet the bond between Austria and Prussia, but Francis was urged to put forth all his diplomatic skill for the attainment of these desirable objects. This, however, was not the whole of his task. The King's illness might perchance take a serious turn, so it was of the utmost moment to secure the goodwill of the Crown Prince. Merely to get into touch with him would not suffice. Francis must strive to lay the foundation of an enduring friendship between Frederick and himself. The unlucky Frederick was still in semi-banishment at Cüstrin, but the arrival of Francis was expected to serve as a pretext for his recall.

The Prussian King expressed much satisfaction at the prospect of entertaining the Duke of Lorraine. Accordingly, on January 26th, 1732, the latter set out on his journey across Germany, winning favour at all the Courts on his route. At the ducal residences of the House of Brunswick he was welcomed by the relatives of Empress Elizabeth, including the well-meaning but shy and commonplace girl whose betrothal to the Crown Prince of Prussia might any day be announced. From the first suggestion of the alliance Frederick had never ceased to protest against it. There were, he maintained, other eligible princesses whom rumour painted in more flattering colours than the insignificant daughter of the Duke of Brunswick, although he would far rather travel for a time than marry any one. He pleaded his right to take a wife for his own pleasure rather than that of his father. But right and reason had no chance to prevail against the paternal, backed by the Imperial will. As the price of peace and an establishment separate from that of his tyrannical sire, Frederick consented to a lifelong sacrifice.

On the evening of February 26th he appeared in the royal circle for the first time since the marriage of his sister Wilhelmina, three months previously. He was forthwith presented to his intended bride, who had been more than a week in Berlin, and to the Duke of Lorraine, who had arrived that very day. The Duke was the least embarrassing of the royal guests, and to him the Crown Prince attached himself with a friendliness which would have rejoiced the heart of Charles VI. During the ensuing three weeks the two young men were much together and evidently on terms of great good-fellowship. Francis was present at the betrothal of Frederick and Elizabeth Christina, and took part in the subsequent festivities. The King having got his own way with regard to his son's marriage was disposed to be more conciliatory about other matters, and indifferent health did not make him an indifferent host. There was, indeed, no member of the Prussian Court who was not eager to consult the wishes of the ducal visitor and minister to his pleasure. As a matter of course he inspected giant grenadiers and hunted boars, and found the guns at Spandau as demonstrative as those at "Wulitch." So pleasant were his relations with the Royal Family that they one and all lamented his departure. With the King and the Crown Prince he continued to exchange friendly epistles for several years.

In the capacity of Ambassador-Extraordinary Francis had acquitted himself to the entire satisfaction of the Emperor. Surely he would now receive the reward on which his heart was set. It even seemed as if a double boon were about to be conferred upon him. Already on an excellent footing with the kings who were also Electors of Hanover and Brandenburg, he was directed to visit and propitiate the Elector of Mayence before leaving Germany. This could only signify that Charles regarded him not merely as a son-in-law, but as a successor on the Imperial throne. Clearly he meant to bring about the Duke's installation as King of the Romans, or Emperor-designate.

With rosy visions of the future to beguile the time and the magic of spring in the air, Francis, free at last from all political engagements, set out for the Imperial capital. At Breslau, in Silesia, he was perplexed to hear of his appointment to the office of Governor-General of Hungary. The honour was great, its bestowal a proof of the utmost confidence, yet the traveller did not finish his journey in the exultant mood in which he had begun it. The nomination might be simply a means of enabling the consort of the future Queen of Hungary to acquire first-hand knowledge of the country and its peculiarities, political and otherwise. But that experience might have been gained without making it incumbent on Francis to reside at Pressburg. He had been dreaming of an establishment at Vienna and the closest intimacy with the Imperial household. Now he could not help fearing that a reward he had not coveted was to be substituted for the objects of supreme desire which had seemed almost within his grasp.

His spirits revived when he arrived at the Hofburg and was received by Charles VI and his family with manifestations of lively satisfaction. The Emperor and Empress made no secret of their pleasure in the reunion. It was likewise encouraging to be assured that he was still without a rival in the affections of Archduchess Theresa. In other respects she had changed a good deal during the two and a half years of his absence. The child of twelve had given place to a girl of fifteen, as tall as himself, and distinctly attractive, in spite of her lankness and excessive pallor. The resemblance to her mother had become more pronounced; but it was not so much an exact as an accentuated likeness. Theresa's features were not so delicately perfect as her mother's had been: her nose was perceptibly larger, so also was her mouth, though with no suggestion of the ugly Habsburg lip. Contemporaries of the Empress Elizabeth refer to the "silvery" fairness of her abundant hair. Theresa inherited the wealth of hair, but with more colour in it—bright golden colour. Beneath its coils and curls her forehead no longer looked disproportionately high. Her mother's blue eyes were in keeping with the flower-like beauty of her youth. Theresa's eyes were grey, though with gleams of blue in them—eyes so full of sparkle that they seemed to give out light rather than reflect it.

Though deficient as yet in physical strength, there was no doubt of the vigour of her mental powers. Intellectual culture had passed her by. The Counter-Reformation, with its embargo on original research, had deprived Vienna of its former eminence as a centre of learning. Apart from music, there was nothing in her training that could appeal to the imaginative side of her nature. But she had an inborn aptitude for observation, reflection, and logical reasoning. Save in the sphere of religion, where she had been led to believe that inquiry was deadly sin, she proved quite capable of thinking for herself, of taking direct, unbiased views of things, and of forming her own opinions of the social and political worlds of her day in so far as she was acquainted with them. Her will was strong. Her tendency to act on her own initiative was merely in abeyance. Not all the repressive influence of a most conventional, stereotyped existence had been able to hinder the development of an unmistakable personality.

The ancestral sponsors had reason to be proud of the recipient of their gifts. Theresa, for her part, was proud of her ancestors and their achievements. Like her father, she refused to contemplate the possibility of a diminished Habsburg inheritance. Unlike her father, she had little doubt of her own succession. The ensuring of the Pragmatic Sanction was therefore to her a matter of the first importance. There was only one sacrifice which she was not prepared to make for it. She was resolved that nothing short of coercion would induce her to accept any husband but Francis of Lorraine. Her love for him was the sole romantic element in her life, the power which enabled her to view the future through magic casements, closed as a rule to women of her rank.

Theresa's joy over the return of her prince was mingled with disappointment as keen as his own when the Emperor gave no sign of fulfilling the hopes he had raised, the hopes he was known to have cherished himself. That Francis did not greatly desire the office of Viceroy of Hungary was evident, but the suggestion that he should receive some other mark of Imperial favour met with no response. The town of Pozsony, or Pressburg, which the Habsburg rulers had made the capital of Hungary in place of Buda, was forty miles from Vienna. Residence there did not imply exile from the Austrian capital, but it was too far off for frequent goings and comings. The new Governor found that he was expected to proceed thither without delay. Preparations were being made for his state entry into the city. The long-looked-for, wholly indefinite sojourn in Vienna dwindled down to two short weeks. He could but hope that the time was not far off when reasons of State would cease to come between him and the fulfilment of his cherished desire. Meanwhile he wisely resolved to discharge his new duties as efficiently as possible. A friendly spirit characterized all his dealings with the Hungarians. He took pains to acquaint himself with their laws and customs. To obtain reliable information about the needs and possibilities of the country, he undertook a series of journeys which brought him into personal contact with the leading inhabitants of nearly every district.

CHAPTER V

THE WAR OF THE POLISH SUCCESSION, AND THE MARRIAGE OF MARIA THERESA

ALTHOUGH the Emperor vouchsafed no explanation of his change of purpose, it was a sure indication of clouds on the political horizon. The storm held off till the following year (1733), and then broke in the War of the Polish Succession. In February Augustus II, Elector of Saxony, and King of Poland, came to the end of his worthless existence. At the instigation of the French Government the Poles nominated as successor to their elective monarchy an already deposed king, Stanislaus Leszczynski, father-in-law of Louis XV. He was duly re-elected (September 1st, 1733), but not even France, allied with Spain, Sardinia, and some few German states, could avail to keep him on his throne against the will of Russia and Austria. The reign of Stanislaus lasted about a month. Then a Russian army invaded Poland, drove him out of Warsaw, thence to Danzig, and so eventually back to France. Another king, Augustus III, the new Elector of Saxony, was forced upon the reluctant Poles. His offer to guarantee the Pragmatic Sanction was the main reason of the Emperor's intervention on his behalf. It was an ill-advised step. Charles had neither a strong army nor a full treasury, and it was beyond his power to cope, at one and the same time, with the French and Sardinians in Northern Italy, with the Spaniards in the south of the Peninsula, and with the French army which had overrun Lorraine and crossed the Rhine. Elizabeth Farnese saw her way to gaining another point. The Spaniards took possession of Sicily, and Don Carlos was crowned king at Palermo (1735).

In Germany the French, at first successful, were afterwards repulsed and kept in check by Prince Eugene. For want of adequate support he could not follow up advantages, and the enemy was not forced to evacuate Lorraine. "The Little Abbé" had grown old and feeble, but he could still recognize a man of parts, even if he were only in the making. The ability of Crown Prince Frederick, who had accompanied the Prussian contingent of the Imperial army, did not escape the old commander. It gave him a feeling of uneasiness, and made him ask himself if it boded good or ill to the House of Habsburg. When the answer to that question was forthcoming he was no longer among the living. The first campaign of Frederick coincided with the last campaign of the great Eugene.

In the light of after events, Walpole's policy of neutrality, which withheld from the Emperor the support of the Maritime Powers, was short-sighted in the extreme. True, they had no direct interest in Poland, but as the Spaniards had reaped all the advantages of the Treaty of Seville and disregarded its obligations, war between Great Britain and Spain was a mere question of time. Had it been declared in 1733 instead of 1739, it might have had a more fortunate issue for England, while the Bourbon allies would hardly have had their own way in Italy; nor would Charles VI have been brought to such a pass that yielding to the extortionate demands of France and Spain seemed to him a lesser evil than continuing the war.

The Queen of Spain, insatiable as ever, had no sooner received assurance of the Emperor's consent that Don Carlos should remain in undisputed possession of both Naples and Sicily, than she began to agitate for the transfer of Parma and Piacenza to her second son, Don Philip. When these duchies were definitely assigned to the Emperor, she sought to obtain them indirectly by reverting to the old project of marriage between her sons and the Archduchesses. The feasibility of betrothing the younger girl to a Spanish prince was seriously debated at Vienna, but the opponents of Bourbon aggrandizement would not hear of the scheme. Even when it was coupled with a proposal to sanction Theresa's marriage with the Duke of Lorraine it did not exclude the possibility that Marianne's descendants might inherit an empire co-extensive with that of Charles V.

Never had the Emperor been so utterly perplexed. He did not want to perpetuate the enmity with Spain. And Don Carlos, as Charles III, King of Naples and heir presumptive to his father's throne, had as good a claim to consideration as the King of Sardinia and the Hereditary Princes of Saxony and Bavaria, all of whom had been proposed to His Imperial Majesty as sons-in-law.

Had it been possible for Charles VI to throw aside all scruples and make the future safety of the monarchy his sole object, his obvious course was to effect a matrimonial alliance with Bavaria. The Elector, whose wife was the younger daughter of Joseph I, had repudiated the Pragmatic Sanction, and was suspected of an intention to dispute it at the earliest possible moment. The position of his territory gave him every facility for the invasion of Austria or for the protection of Austria if the interests of the two countries were identified. It was, however, a serious drawback that the Hereditary Prince of Bavaria had just completed his eighth year, whereas Theresa was eighteen when the War of the Polish Succession came to an end. Though her health still left something to be desired, she was steadily gaining strength, and her face was no longer colourless. Those who observed the Emperor's pride in his good-looking, companionable daughter, and her ascendancy over him, were justified in prophesying that "a paternal tenderness for the Archduchess" would eventually decide the problem of her marriage. Her own straightforward nature refused to admit that there was any problem to be solved. The years had merely brought the element of passion into her love for Francis of Lorraine. In July, 1735, Sir Thomas Robinson, the British Ambassador to Vienna, describes Theresa as "a princess of the highest spirit. She reasons already. Her father's losses are her own. She admires his virtues, but then she condemns his mismanagement, and is of a temper so formed for rule and ambition, as to look upon him as little more than her administrator. Notwithstanding this lofty humour by day, she sighs and pines all night for her Duke of Lorraine. If she sleep, it is only to dream of him; if she wake, it is but to talk of him to the lady-in-waiting; so that, as far as a judgment can be made from present appearances, there is no more probability of her ever forgetting the very individual government and the very individual husband which she thinks herself born to, than of her forgiving the authors of her losing either. For, if she be married to Don Carlos, she will, or she will not, lose these countries. If she does not, and keeps them with Spain or more, she still loses the prince whom she loves, and will have but the more power to revenge herself. If excluded from these countries, which she already looks upon as her own, that loss, added to the loss of the Duke of Lorraine, will make her the most turbulent queen that ever reigned in Spain." One would hardly think it possible for a contemporary of Elizabeth Farnese to imagine a greater firebrand among the potentates of Europe. But Robinson was right in surmising that Theresa could not be thwarted with impunity.

Interesting impressions of the Archduchess at this period of her career are also recorded by Foscarini, the Venetian Envoy to the Imperial Court. He declares it doubtful if a search through the wide world would discover any woman better fitted to inherit the traditions and responsibilities of the House of Austria than the Emperor's elder daughter. Witness the composure of her manner, her thoughtful, almost serious expression, the consummate tact with which she fulfilled the duties of her station. Indeed, no ordinary girl could have humoured her father's fixed idea with regard to heirs without bating a jot of her own claim or giving any handle to possible mischief-makers. "Always," says the admiring Foscarini, "she says and does the right thing." Like Robinson, he regards her as "a princess of the highest spirit," and adds that "this quality conjoined with a certain virility of mind is perhaps the most remarkable of her gifts, and likely to carry her far on the way to greatness. She never loses sight of her future position, and, when she comes into her inheritance, those who are summoned to her councils will find that decisions rest with her and not with them."

Great was Theresa's relief when her father was at last persuaded to forego the idea of a close relationship with

Spain. He flattered himself that, by giving up his claims to the Two Sicilies, he had at least secured Philip V's continued support of the Pragmatic Sanction. Concessions in Northern Italy sufficed to appease the King of Sardinia. Saxony's adhesion had already been purchased. If the demands of France could be complied with, there would be less risk in disappointing the Elector of Bavaria, who depended on France for support. But Cardinal Fleury, the powerful minister of Louis XV, was intent on driving a hard bargain. He undertook that France should guarantee the Pragmatic Sanction and that Stanislaus should renounce his claim to the Polish crown if the latter received the Duchies of Lorraine and Bar by way of compensation. He was not, however, to have absolute possession of these territories; at his death they were to revert to the French Crown.

Though Charles VI had not scrupled to baffle the expectations of his guest for the space of twelve years, he shrank from the proposal to fleece him outright. But Fleury was obdurate, and the bait of a long-coveted Pragmatic Sanction guarantee was irresistible. It was agreed that the Duke of Lorraine should be advised to surrender his patrimony in return for immediate marriage with Archduchess Theresa and the reversion of the Grand Duchy of Tuscany.

Francis, as was to be expected, regarded the scheme with unqualified aversion. What was Tuscany to him in comparison with the great memories that clustered about the name of Lorraine? His mother vigorously opposed the relinquishment of any part of his inheritance; his subjects naturally protested. The Duke urged his point of view at Vienna. He consulted Robinson as to a possible intervention of George II. It was all in vain. So far as France and Austria were concerned, the infamous transaction was complete. Bartenstein was commissioned to draw up the formal documents and extort the assent of Francis. "The man in the ill-humour" is Robinson's favourite description of Bartenstein. And certainly towards those who failed to agree with him the secretary showed himself brusque and overbearing to the last degree. His boundless self-confidence was not without justification. The son of a professor at Strasburg, he owed his position to sheer ability. With his unrivalled knowledge of the intricacies of Imperial jurisprudence it was natural that he should betake himself to Vienna, where he soon gained a footing on the official ladder. Thence he made his way to the nominal post of Secretary to the Cabinet, or, as it was called in Austria, the Ministerial Conference. Virtually Bartenstein became the most indispensable and powerful of all the civil functionaries. On his convenient shoulders Charles VI piled the disagreeable business of the State, and generally found the Secretary's energy and resourcefulness equal to the burden. Thus when Francis of Lorraine declined to take a step which would leave him without a country of his own, Bartenstein merely replied that Bar must be relinquished immediately, but that he could keep Lorraine until the death of the last of the Medici left the throne of Tuscany vacant. The Duke's further plea that there should be no undue haste in coming to a decision simply irritated his tormentor. "No abdication, no Archduchess," quoth the relentless Bartenstein. And Francis ultimately consented to renounce his duchy when the Italian substitute should be available.

As the year 1735 drew to a close, Robinson reported "great talk of the approaching marriage." Early in 1736 the preliminary arrangements were complete. On January 31st Francis of Lorraine, having made formal request for the hand of the Archduchess, was received in state by the Emperor, the Empress Elizabeth, and their elder daughter. The latter wore the Duke's gift of his portrait set in a brooch. This was in accordance with a custom of the period, whereby the lover sent his portrait to the object of his affection. If she wore it at their next meeting it signified acceptance of the offer of marriage. In the present instance it indicated that for Francis and Theresa the long years of waiting and uncertainty were over—the day of their betrothal had come at last.

On the morrow the Hall of Knights was filled with a company as distinguished as that which had gathered within its walls to witness the christening of the Archduchess. Indeed, many of those present could recall the former ceremony and realize the flight of time as they gazed at the tall slender girl, whose nineteenth birthday was not far off, with her shining eyes, her shining golden hair, and radiant expression. To-day they had assembled to listen to her so-called renunciation—a last concession to her father's peculiar craze. First came a little speech from the Emperor to his guests. Then Chancellor Sinzendorff read over the formulary whereby Archduchess Maria Theresa renounced the succession for herself and her descendants if the long-expected male heir should after all be born. With her hand upon the Gospels she took the required oath. That part of the vow which had reference to descendants was likewise sworn to by Francis of Lorraine. He further undertook that, in his own person, he would never claim any part of the Habsburg dominions.

The ceremony over, Francis set out for Pressburg. During the interval between the renunciation on February 1st and the marriage on February 12th a few brief notes were exchanged by the lovers—curious little missives in which the language of passionate devotion alternates with the stilted phraseology of convention. The first communication is from the absent bridegroom.

"MOST SERENE ARCHDUCHESS, MY ANGEL BRIDE,

"Having received from His Majesty the Emperor most gracious permission to write to your dearness, I can no longer refrain from profiting by this act of condescension. Dearest, it will not be difficult for you to believe that nothing is harder for me than to approach you by letter instead of throwing myself at your feet. Let my dearest of all brides be fully assured that in all the world there is no bridegroom more entirely devoted and reverential than my angel bride's most faithful servant

"FRANZ."

The bride's reply was obviously supervised in so far as the note itself, written throughout in German, was concerned. It contrasts oddly with the delightful postscript, in a jumble of languages, which the writer contrived to scribble on the back of her communication while the obliging messenger waited.

"MOST SERENE DUKE, MUCH-LOVED BRIDEGROOM,

"Your dear writing rejoiced me greatly. I am fully persuaded that you would rather have assured me of your affection in person than by letter. And you too, I doubt not, will believe that that is precisely how I feel myself. It is good that our separation is not for long. I trust there will be fewer partings in our future, much-longed-for life together. I assure you that as long as I have any being I will remain your most faithful bride.

"MARIA THERESA.

"VIENNA, *February 8th*, 1736.

"POSTSCRIPT.—Dear Heart, I am infinitely obliged to you for your kindness in sending me news of yourself. I was a poor, miserable, anxious creature before your message came. Love me a little, and forgive me if I do not say much by way of answer. It is ten o'clock, and Herbeville is waiting for my letter. Farewell, dear Mouse. I embrace you with all my heart. Take care of yourself. Adieu, dear one.

"Je suis la votre sponsia dilectissima."

"I have this moment received my dearest's gracious letter," writes Francis on the following day. "It is no small comfort to me, separated as I am from you. I assure you the days seem unendurable on which I do not see my dearest of all brides. I would be very downcast if I did not constantly remember our forthcoming union on Sunday, at the Church of the Augustines. Thereafter my happiness will be complete."

There is no postscript to the written-to-order acknowledgment of this note. Francis, however, professes himself "greatly obliged" for his betrothed's "condescension" in replying to his second epistolary effort. "These lines," he continues, "are the last written token of devotion which I shall lay at your feet. To-morrow I leave here for Vienna. The day after to-morrow I hope to arrive at the appointed time. I shall count the moments until I come to the one which will rid me of care and anxiety, and make me perfectly happy."

On the evening of February 12th, 1736, the marriage was celebrated with a certain dignified simplicity. By covered way and private staircase the bridal procession passed from the Hofburg to the church of the adjacent convent of the Augustine (or Austin) friars. It was also the church of the Austrian Court, its great chancel being well adapted for State functions. Of all the ceremonies that have taken place beneath its roof, the wedding of Maria Theresa was by far the most important. The dispatches of the British Ambassador contain interesting details of the event. When the invited guests had assembled, "the Duke of Lorraine, dressed in white *à l'antique,* with a mantle of silver tissue," appeared with the Emperor. "Afterwards came the Archduchess, likewise in white, supported by the two Empresses," her train borne by Countess Fuchs, promoted to the office of Mistress of the new Household. "What was most remarkable about the bride's dress was, that besides the other incumbrances of great loads of diamonds upon her head and neck, the very robe itself was embroidered, to use that expression, with diamonds." A truly masculine piece of description! "The Papal Nuncio celebrated the marriage in the quality of perpetual curate to the Imperial Court, and by a particular commission as the Pope's delegate."

After the actual ceremony the bride and bridegroom returned to their original places, and the Te Deum was sung to the accompaniment of drums and trumpets. Then returned to their original places, and the *Te Deum* was the service was over and the wedding procession on its way from the church to the banqueting-hall.

To bride and bridegroom there had thus been given the desire of their hearts, though both had to pay a price for happiness. The wife had still to learn all that was implied in the alienation of Bavaria. The husband had no chance of forgetting that he had been cut adrift from every tie which bound him to the past history of his race. Robinson tells how the Duke's subjects came to the wedding in great numbers and with great magnificence. "They have given," says he, "a remarkable, though it may be last, instance of their duty and affection for the House of Lorraine." As for the Duke and his consort, the Ambassador justly remarks that " few persons of their high rank have had the advantage of founding their mutual desires and sentiments upon a personal acquaintance for so long a time before their marriage, which particularly gives the greater beauty to the inscription of a medal struck upon this occasion, namely, *Votorum tandem compotes*."[1]

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[1] Having at length the fruition of our desires.

CHAPTER VI

MARIA THERESA AS DUCHESS OF LORRAINE AND GRAND DUCHESS OF TUSCANY—DEATH OF CHARLES VI

THE various State celebrations in honour of the marriage were duly graced by the presence of the bride and bridegroom. But before the honeymoon was over they set out on a pilgrimage to Mariazell, in Styria. No eyes had they for the picturesque surroundings of the little village which was their goal. The great, many-towered church of Mariazell alone possessed attraction for them. In 1736 it was a recently completed structure. Enclosed within it was the ancient chapel of a wonder-working image of the Madonna and Child. At this inner shrine the newly wedded Duke and Duchess knelt to invoke divine protection and guidance in the new life that stretched before them like another pilgrim's way.

Hardships encountered them at the very outset. They returned to their apartments in the Hofburg to find that during their absence "difficulties had arisen about the time of the immission of King Stanislaus into Lorraine. For the Imperial Court had negotiated itself into slavish dependence on France, and France was greedy to have immediate possession of the duchy."[1] The new development was a blow to the Emperor's son-in-law, who had built considerable hopes on the undertaking that the sacrifice was not to be exacted forthwith. The nobles whose interest in their ruler's marriage had brought them from Lorraine to Vienna had not yet returned home. They were instant in petitioning both Duke and Emperor not to make over to France a country which had taken no active part in the War of the Polish Succession. The chief spokesman on their side was Prince Charles of Lorraine. As heir-presumptive to the duchy, he had a peculiar right to be heard. On the other side was the somewhat abject figure of His Imperial Majesty, fearful lest France should withdraw her guarantee of the Pragmatic Sanction, fearful also lest "the Termagant of Spain" should contrive to establish Don Philip on the throne of Tuscany. Francis was constrained to realize that, so far as Charles VI was concerned, the fate of Lorraine was sealed.

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[1] Robinson.

Naturally enough no assurance of compensation elsewhere could take from the bitterness of the Duke's enforced renunciation of the crown of his ancestors. Even the diplomatist who negotiated on behalf of France was moved by the young man's sorrowful reluctance to sign the instrument of abdication. Three times he took up the pen, only to let it fall again. Convinced at last that there was no outlet for escape, he put his name to the document which made Lorraine a province of France till 1870 (April, 1736).

It is difficult to conceive that the Emperor would have yielded so tamely to the demands of Cardinal Fleury if, in place of Bartenstein, Eugene had been the pilot of the State. When the crisis arose it was still possible for Charles to take counsel with the greatest and most trustworthy of his advisers. Eugene's mental powers were little impaired, but seventy-two years of strenuous life had worn him out physically. He could no longer draw up lengthy memorials or attend conferences at the Hofburg. Charles, however, did not see his way to set aside the law of etiquette, which precluded the monarch from going to a minister's residence in order to consult him.

On April 20th, nine days after the abdication of the Duke of Lorraine, Eugene presided over a meeting of the Privy Council, which was held at his own palace. When his servants entered his room next morning, "they found him extinguished in his bed like a taper."[1] Death had come easily to the lonely old man, who had served his day and generation so faithfully. A lion in his menagerie had

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[1] Sir Thomas Robinson.

PRINCE EUGENE

AFTER A PORTRAIT BY VAN SCHÜPPEN

wakened many sleepers by roaring loudly at three in the morning. This incident, according to popular belief, indicated the hour at which "the noble knight" had passed away. "He was the real emperor," said Crown Prince Frederick of Prussia. It was a sinister fate that deprived Austria of her powerful protector when her rulers had just given unmistakable proof of weakness and malleability.

The Dowager Duchess of Lorraine was nearly beside herself with grief for the loss of the principality. Her letters express in no measured terms her utter disgust with the way in which her son's abdication had been brought about. She rejected with scorn the offer of a residence in Brussels. The Emperor's proposal that Francis should become Governor-General of the Netherlands made the suggestion all the more distasteful. The irate Duchess declared that she had no desire to see either her son or his wife. If she were forced to leave the duchy she would rather go to Paris and claim her rights as a princess of France than be dependent on the Emperor; but all she asked was to end her days in Lorraine. She was somewhat appeased when Francis contrived that her wish should be respected. Nancy and Lunéville were given up to Stanislaus. But henceforward the Duchess had her own little Court at Commercy. She was further mollified when Francis used his influence to arrange a marriage between his elder sister and the King of Sardinia, and to obtain the Emperor's secret promise that Prince Charles of Lorraine should become the husband of Archduchess Marianne. A letter from her daughter-in-law, with important news, seems to have gone far to complete the work of reconciliation. The prospective grandmother ceased to bear a grudge against her son and his consort, though she continued to lament the fate of her adopted country. In a communication addressed to Francis she says: "Your wife has written me the friendliest letter in the world, full of kindness for you and for myself. I beg you to thank her for it, and to assure her that I reciprocate her good wishes. I pray God to bless you both and the child who will be born to you. May it be a fine prince, who will bring us to the end of some of our troubles." That the expected infant might be a prince was also the fervent desire of the maternal grandparents. Alas for the vanity of human wishes! On February 3rd, 1737, the young Duchess of Lorraine gave birth to a daughter.

When time had taken the sting out of Charles VI's disappointment, he became strongly attached to his first grandchild. After the Empress she was named Elizabeth, and she certainly suffered from no lack of care during her infancy. Mindful of the old stories of the unsatisfactoriness of foster-mothers, Maria Theresa disregarded convention and nursed her baby herself.

Though the Duke of Lorraine was nominated Governor of the Netherlands early in 1736, certain formalities had to be complied with before he could proceed to Brussels. The dilatory Austrian officials did not complete these preliminary arrangements for a whole year. By that time Imperial policy had entered on a new phase, and Francis had become more eager for a military than a civil appointment.

When the combined action of the Courts of Vienna and St. Petersburg had reduced the Poles to submission, the Russian Empress, Anne, determined to pursue her favourite scheme of conquest at the expense of Turkey. A pretext for invading that country was speedily found, and, before the Turks could organize resistance, Azov was besieged and the Crimea overrun. In their distress the Turks appealed for a mediator from among the European Powers. With subtle intent Austria undertook the office. Dazzled by the success of Russia, Charles VI saw no reason why like good fortune should not attend his own arms. Then would he be able to recoup himself in the East for his losses in the recent war. Designedly, therefore, the terms of pacification proposed by him to the Turks were made too hard for acceptance, albeit the alternative was a prospect of being crushed between the forces of the Emperor and the Czarina.

Amongst the volunteers in the Imperial army were Francis of Lorraine and his brother. The former might have proceeded to Italy instead of to the Balkan provinces, for the Grand Duke of Tuscany died in July, 1737. But after taking steps to safeguard his interests in the duchy, the new Duke set out in quest of military renown. In the first campaign his record was good, but he gave no evidence of such exceptional ability as would have justified his appointment as Commander-in-Chief. Yet it was in this capacity that, after an interval in Vienna, he returned to the seat of war. In the first campaign Austria had fared badly. The early operations of the second, that of 1738, were marked by some degree of success; but disasters followed. Marshal Königsegg, who had been deputed to serve as Chief of the Staff and adviser to the young General, pushed caution to the verge of timidity, and was found wanting in sudden emergencies. The Duke himself was frequently prostrated with the fever which wrought havoc amongst the rank and file of the army. Contrary to all expectation, the Turks began to make headway against both enemies. In place of annexing fresh territories the Austrian Government were brought face to face with the possibility of having to forfeit the spoils of the victories of Prince Eugene.

The close of the campaign found Königsegg deprived of his command, and Francis practically in the same position. To the latter a second daughter (Marianne) was born in October, 1738. This was regarded by the people as an additional grievance. The outcry against the Princes of Lorraine overcame the Emperor's reluctance to be even temporarily parted from his daughter. The Tuscans had more than once protested against the continued absence of their new ruler. It was therefore arranged that Francis should betake himself to Italy with his wife and brother, and stay there till the storm blew over. On December 17th, 1738, they set out for Florence. It was not the best season of the year for a journey through mountainous country, but in other respects there was no question of its timeliness. The happiness of Maria Theresa's first year of married life had been succeeded by experiences so trying that in after days she shrank from recalling them. To her the outbreak of war had meant the pain of separation from her husband, constant anxiety about his health and safety, and, latterly, the wretchedness of feeling that heartache, suspense, and loneliness had been endured in vain. Nothing, therefore, could have been more opportune than this visit to Tuscany. In Central Europe the season had been unusually mild. Even in the upland regions of Carinthia and Southern Tyrol the snow was not deep enough to block the roads. From time to time the travellers heard disquieting rumours of an epidemic with some of the symptoms of plague, but they arrived safe and sound in the famous city of Trent, where they were hospitably entertained by the Prince-Bishop.

On resuming their journey, a few more stages brought them to the Venetian frontier. Here they were received with all due honour, but the authorities absolutely refused to allow their Grand Ducal Highnesses to proceed further until they had been fourteen days in quarantine. The interference with prearranged functions was vexatious. The villa allotted to the travellers was ill-adapted for the colder weather which set in with the new year. Though they were all naturally disposed to make the best of things, time hung heavily on their hands, and they tended to brood over recent mishaps. Recalling the experience in later life, Maria Theresa admitted that she was desperately homesick. She missed the children who had received so much of her attention. The younger baby had necessarily been handed over to a wet-nurse. Whether or not she received proper care during her mother's absence, the fact remains that Archduchess Marianne was always more or less of an invalid.

Weary of the delay and discomfort, the Grand Duke appealed to the Venetian Senate for a shortening of the period of detention. When this was refused he took the law into his own hands and escaped with his companions to Mantua, where they were on Imperial territory. Thence, by way of Bologna, they reached the Tuscan frontier. On January 20th, 1739, more than a month after their departure from Vienna, the Grand Duke and his consort made their state entry into Florence. At the cathedral they were welcomed by the archbishop and all the leading ecclesiastics and Government officials. After a thanksgiving service the procession was re-formed, and the Grand Duke and Duchess were escorted to their residence—the Pitti Palace.

Demonstrations of enthusiasm for the stranger who had been imposed on them as sovereign were not to be expected from the Florentines; but there was no exhibition of actual hostility such as marked the entry of Stanislaus into Nancy, the capital of Lorraine. Even before his arrival

Francis had created a good impression by his tactful consideration of the sister of his predecessor, Maria de' Medici, the widowed Electress Palatine. She had been offered the position of regent, and although this was declined she was left in undisturbed occupation of her apartments at the Pitti.

Her reception of the founders of the new dynasty was merely formal, but she was not proof against their manifest desire for a good understanding with her. The joint occupants of the Palace were soon on amicable terms, a circumstance which contributed in no small measure to the peaceful installation of a foreigner as Grand Duke. Not for years had there been so much life and gaiety in Florence as in the first days of the visit of Francis and Maria Theresa. Prince Charles of Lorraine, as heir-presumptive, also came in for his full share of attention at the various social and public festivities. There were numerous dramatic and other performances, and for three nights the city was illuminated.

In Tuscany, as in Hungary, Francis did his utmost to comprehend the needs and conditions of the country. A contemporary English traveller tells how he and his brother "met the Grand Duke and Duchess of Tuscany within a little way of Siena. We stopped our chaise till they were past by. The Duke was going from Florence to visit Siena and the other parts of his dominions. The whole country of Tuscany," continues the writer, "is very pleasant, abounding with fine hills and fruitful vales, rivers and fountains, and many delightful prospects, in a serene and healthful air, and might become a happy country if the present Grand Duke can keep it in peaceable possession, and would give his subjects proper encouragement to improve their native commodities, and protection from the tyranny and oppression of the clergy."[1]

These objects were held by Francis himself to be eminently desirable. Had he been the resident governor of his comparatively small state he would probably have attained them, and ushered in a brighter day for Tuscany. The prospect of peace was to some extent assured by the stipulation that the duchy was never to form part of the hereditary dominions of Austria, that it was exempt from obligation to support the Pragmatic Sanction, and that the sovereignty was to pass either to the second son of Francis or to his brother.

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[1] Whatley, *A Short Account of a Late Journey to Tuscany*, 1741.

As an absentee ruler Francis could do little to keep the people from being preyed upon by swarms of monks, friars, and other ecclesiastics who, in the towns, sometimes constituted the bulk of the population. They were dangerous political opponents. Even during the Duke's sojourn in Florence they incited the citizens against him, "and had to be kept in some decorum by German and Swiss soldiers."[1]

The efforts of Francis to revive the commerce and industry of the country were not sufficiently disinterested to be of much benefit to his subjects. For the profits of successful enterprise were systematically diverted from Tuscany to Austria. By the month of April Charles VI was becoming impatient for the return of the absent members of his household. Francis regretted the necessity he was under of leaving his duchy at the end of three months and before he had completed his arrangements for its future government. His wife, who was enjoying the springtide in Italy, was equally loath to obey the summons. But obeyed it had to be. "The Grand Duke's friends at Florence," says the contemporary traveller, "are erecting a magnificent triumphal arch in honour to him, about the same size as those of Severus and Constantine at Rome, so that we imagine he intends soon to make them a second visit, and render himself as acceptable to them as possible by some act of popularity."[2] The uninteresting modern arch was fortunately placed outside the wall of ancient Florence. It is still standing just beyond the Porta San Gallo. But Francis never saw it finished. One thing or another interfered with his long-cherished intention of revisiting Tuscany. On April 27th, 1739, the Grand Duke and Duchess had their last glimpse of Florence. Then they passed beyond its crumbling city wall and journeyed northward to Milan.

Here they were once more in Imperial territory. It was therefore incumbent on the Emperor's daughter to hold receptions and attend public functions; but her consort went on from Milan to Turin to visit his sister and brother-in-law, the King and Queen of Sardinia. He was destined to see all the members of his family in the course of this journey, for his mother and younger sister proposed to meet the travellers at Innsbruck. When, therefore, he had rejoined his wife, they set out afresh, and traversed the whole County of Tyrol from south to north until they reached the little capital hidden away behind its barricade of mountains. Francis is known to have objected strongly to the feeling of being shut in by hills, and it is to be feared that his companions were equally unappreciative of the grandeur of the scenery through which they passed. At the end of the journey came the first meeting between Maria Theresa and her mother-in-law, the complete reconciliation of the latter to her elder son, and a week of such pleasant intercourse that it must have given rise to a desire to repeat the experience. It happened, however, that during the remaining five years of the life of the Dowager Duchess, the times were too much out of joint for family reunions to be practicable. She returned to Lorraine with her daughter in the last days of May, while Francis and his wife continued their journey to Vienna, from which they had been absent for six months.

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[1] Whatley, *A Short Account of a Late Journey to Tuscany*, 1741.

[2] Whatley, *ib.*

Another campaign against the Turks was on the point of beginning, and Francis was with difficulty persuaded to forego his intention of rejoining the army. There was no disputing his plea that some notable achievement would fully reinstate him in public favour, but the Emperor realized that there were other possibilities, and he would not risk any further association of his son-in-law with untoward occurrences. As it was, the people had been demanding the marriage of Archduchess Marianne to the Prince of Bavaria, and an alteration of the succession in her favour. Charles' main reason for cutting short the visit of his elder daughter to Italy was the well-founded apprehension of an attempt to prevent her return to Austria.

The command of the army was therefore entrusted to Marshal Wallis; but the result was the ruin of another military reputation. Wallis was defeated in battle, and

Belgrade was besieged by the Turks. Well might Charles VI exclaim that the glory of Austria had departed with Prince Eugene. Under the direction of a great leader subordinate commanders had achieved distinction. Left to their own resources they had, so far, been found wanting.

Dread of some overwhelming disaster impelled Charles to withdraw from the war. General Neipperg was commissioned to make peace with the Turks. This task also was of supreme importance, and it had been given to the wrong man. Neipperg was far too precipitate in his dealings with the enemy. The conquests of Prince Eugene were ruthlessly sacrificed. In particular, the loss of Belgrade aroused widespread indignation. Wallis and Neipperg were sent to different fortresses; but their imprisonment could not bring back the forfeited territories. A rumour got afloat that Neipperg's action had been instigated by the Grand Duke of Tuscany, to whose establishment the General had formerly been attached. It was a baseless supposition, but none the less mischievous in its effect. Francis continued to devote himself to the business of the State, and retained his office of President of the Privy Council; but his influence on its decisions declined perceptibly. "Our only hope," said one of his faithful adherents, "rests on the birth of a prince." And that hope sank very low when in January, 1740, a third daughter was born to the Grand Duke and Duchess of Tuscany.

The infant only lived a year, but the pent-up disappointment of many years found utterance at her unwelcome advent. The people took for granted that the Grand Ducal nursery would be filled with an unbroken series of daughters, and the party in favour of a Bavarian succession multiplied alarmingly. "Will it never be granted to me to see a male heir of my race?" exclaimed the disconsolate Emperor. Depressed and out of health, he almost gave way to despair. In the preceding autumn he had written to Bartenstein, "I am nearing the last moments of my fifty-fourth year. It takes several years of my life with it, but that is of little consequence. God's will be done. May He give me strength to endure for a while, that I may more fully repent of my many sins."

The conviction of failing health redoubled the Emperor's anxiety for the future of his beloved Theresa. Yet he still hesitated to take the step which would have strengthened her position and given her the title of Empress. He may have mistrusted his power to bring about the elevation of Francis to the rank of King of the Romans at a time when the Duke's popularity was on the wane. Or perchance he anticipated less difficulty in obtaining the suffrages of the Electors for a grandson. More probably he was influenced by that hope of a direct heir, always latent in the back of his mind. The Empress Elizabeth was falling into invalid ways. Had she predeceased him, there is not the slightest doubt that Charles would have considered it his duty to marry again.

It was, however, his own health which gave rise to anxiety as the year 1740 wore away, though he suffered from no special complaint, and there was no interruption of his ordinary routine. When Easter was over, the Court took its usual ten-mile journey to Laxenburg. There, during the spring months, the Imperial Family occupied a woodland residence of modest dimensions, and spent their time in hawking and other outdoor amusements. In the summer they returned to Vienna, that is to say, to the Emperor's suburban palace—the Favorita. The Hofburg was not reoccupied till the approach of winter.

But no change of place or occupation could do more than temporarily disperse the gloom which had oppressed the Emperor since the disastrous termination of the Turkish War. The loss of Servia and part of Wallachia was distressing enough, but the shame of the surrender of Belgrade was, Charles maintained, bringing him to his grave. The decease of the King of Prussia on May 31st, 1740, was regarded by him as a reminder of the uncertainty of life. Within a fortnight death had indeed entered the Imperial family. On June 7th the eldest daughter of the Grand Duke and Duchess of Tuscany was seized with a violent form of gastric affection, to which she succumbed on the following day. "She promised a great deal beyond what was to have been expected from her little age. The Grand Duchess was inconsolable."[1] The Emperor, too, was completely overcome by the loss of his eldest and favourite grandchild. The little three-year-old Elizabeth had entwined herself round his affections very much as her mother had done in days gone by. Much of his interest in life seemed to depart with her.

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[1] Robinson to Mr. Weston, June 11th, 1740.

Early in October Charles set out with his family for an annual visit to Hungary. His spirits had slightly revived. His daughter's renewed expectation of motherhood had kindled some faint hope that the next arrival might not be a girl, and he had a whole series of hunting expeditions in prospect.

Undeterred by raw, unsettled weather, he was out day after day. He caught cold, but could not be persuaded to forego his favourite diversion till symptoms of acute irritation of the digestive organs set in. That he fainted several times during the return journey to Vienna seems to indicate the complication of heart weakness. The physicians differed as to the cause of disease. Their remedies afforded relief for a day or two. Then the alarming symptoms recurred, and there was soon no doubt as to the gravity of his condition. With the calmness of one preparing for an ordinary journey, he issued directions to his ministers with regard to his own funeral and his daughter's accession. He sent for her old friend "Father Palffy," and bespoke his interest on her behalf. An interval of comparative relief from pain was spent in advising her as to her future course. Before the interview was over she had broken down utterly, and her father shared the opinion of the doctors that for her the excitement of further leave-taking would be undesirable. During the remaining days of his life the Emperor's private instructions for the guidance of his successor were imparted to his son-in-law, together, no doubt, with expressions of confidence similar to those which Francis had received by letter during his residence in Italy. "It is my greatest comfort," His Majesty had written then, "to know that my daughter is in such good hands. I am assured of her love for you. I trust it may increase more and more, and that, during her absence from me, you will be to her in all things both husband and father."

It was too late to come to any definite decision concerning the marriage of Archduchess Marianne; that was now a question for the policy of the next reign. But the sisters were devoted to one another, and there was no reason to fear that the matter would not be satisfactorily arranged. "Do not grieve," said the Emperor to Charles of Lorraine, when he noticed that the young man had tears in his eyes. "Do not grieve, even though you are losing a true friend."

In the ordering of his affairs, Charles VI made careful provision for the future comfort of the wife who could hardly be induced to leave him day or night. He confided her interests to the special care of Count Starhemberg, his Minister of Finance, and sought to console her by words of affection and encouragement.

A week after his return from Hungary, Charles received the last Sacraments. He had then but two days to live. Once, with a sudden access of strength, he raised himself and, turning so as to face the apartments of his dearly loved elder daughter, he uttered the benediction she could not come to receive. At times his mind wandered back to his youthful days in Spain. Amidst scarcely audible speech the one unmistakable word was "Barcelona"—the name of the city where he had first been acclaimed as king, where he had received his wife and fallen in love with her, the city whose cruel treatment by the supporters of Philip V he never ceased to regret. On October 20th, 1740, in the fifty-sixth year of his age, and the thirtieth of his reign, the father of Maria Theresa passed away.

CHAPTER VII

THE ACCESSION OF MARIA THERESA—INVASION OF SILESIA BY FREDERICK OF PRUSSIA—BIRTH OF THE ARCHDUKE JOSEPH

THE dispatches of Sir Thomas Robinson give a vivid picture of the state of panic which prevailed in Vienna "from the time the Emperor's sickness became serious." That the outlook was threatening could not be denied. Upon the labouring classes especially the burden of taxation pressed with exceeding heaviness. It was natural that they should resent the discreditable issue of the later wars, and evince small confidence in their rulers. The British envoy saw reason to fear that "a stroke so unprovided for as the death of His Majesty might lead to the people throwing themselves absolutely upon the mercy of France"; or, what amounted to much the same thing, upon the mercy of Bavaria supported by France.

The virtual extermination of the Protestant nobles, in the early seventeenth century, had led to the creation of a new aristocracy, dependent on the Emperor. This did not, as had been expected, conduce to the stability of the throne in a time of stress. The recipients of Imperial bounty manifested, for the most part, complete indifference as to what might happen, provided they were left in the undisputed enjoyment of all their privileges and emoluments.

The Ministers of State, men advanced in years and woefully lacking in initiative, were terror-stricken "upon the approaching danger of losing their master. The Turks seemed to them already in Hungary, the Hungarians themselves in arms, the Saxons in Bohemia, the Bavarians at the gates of Vienna, and France the soul of the whole."[1]

In striking contrast to the agitation and dejection of the Ministers was the quiet assumption of responsibility by the woman who might have been excused for any shrinking from the immediate obligations of her position. She had scarcely recovered from the physical prostration which followed her last interview with her father, and which had excited grave apprehension of the loss of her unborn child. That fear had happily been dispelled. Still, it must have involved no inconsiderable effort on her part to give audience to the representatives of the chief Departments of State a few hours after the Emperor's death. They found the successor to the throne not yet seated thereon, but standing on its step. The dark velvet of the canopy and her own sombre garments threw into relief the wonderful fairness of her complexion. To the assembled statesmen, all of them save Bartenstein over seventy years of age, this Princess of twenty-three seemed pathetically young and unfit to be burdened with the cares of sovereignty. Her husband's position, on her left hand and beyond the canopy of the throne, emphasized the fact that he could only take a secondary part in the government of the Habsburg countries.

Although, in referring to the loss she had just sustained, she could not keep back her tears, Maria Theresa was able to assure the Ministers that, for the present, she desired to confirm them in their various offices. They then kissed her hand and saluted her as Queen. For on this occasion she claimed her right to the titles which accrued to her as heiress of the Hereditary States of her dynasty, the chief of these being Queen of Hungary and Bohemia and reigning Archduchess of Austria.

According to Robinson Her Majesty acted prudently in following all the ancient customs. "A demise and an accession in these countries are," he says, "attended with no very pompous circumstances. There are no proclamations, no military salutations or military oaths. Every deviation from old customs would look like a consciousness of some deficiency in the right of the present accession. The Queen of Hungary and Bohemia takes upon herself the government in the very same manner that a new king would. 'Oh! ' cryed the Chancellor to me, 'were she but a man with the very same endowments she has!'"

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[1] Robinson Papers.

"If I am only a poor queen, I have the heart of a king," said Maria Theresa when some similar remark reached her ears. Unlikely though it seemed, she was indeed singularly well equipped for her task. The spirit of bygone kings made her sure of her cause and sure of herself. She yielded to none of her predecessors in courage and inflexibility of purpose. Yet she had no need to deprecate her womanhood. More often than not it was her feminine charm and tact and intuition that steered her clear of rocks and shoals where a male ruler of the type of her father or her successor would inevitably have made shipwreck.

Her familiar correspondence is one long testimony to the predominant part that religion played in her life. Though her views on this subject were not characterized by breadth or tolerance, her Christianity was undoubtedly sincere and practical. She saw no visions and heard no mystic voices, but Joan of Arc herself was not more firmly convinced than Maria Theresa of a divine mission and of divine guidance in the fulfilment thereof.

The first Ministerial Conference of the new reign took place the morning after the Queen's accession. She presided in person and, as on the previous day, was accompanied by her husband. She had resolved that he should be formally associated with her in the work of the government, but that was a matter for subsequent arrangement. How to give full effect to the law of the Pragmatic Sanction was the business which took precedence of everything else. A formal notification of the death of Charles VI and of his daughter's assumption of all hereditary titles was drawn up and dispatched to the governors of the various states and dominions within the monarchy, as well as to all the Courts of Europe. Not till the Queen had received replies to this circular would she be able, as Robinson puts it, "to distinguish between the countenances of her friends and those of her pretended friends but real enemies."

Three days later a second conference was held. The general distrust of Bavaria made it imperative to take precautions against attack. Amongst the reverend signors in the Council Chamber was one who had not appeared at the former meeting. As old as the oldest Minister present, it could yet be said of Count John Palffy that his eye was not dim nor his natural force abated. His presence was due to a special summons from the new monarch. While waiting anxiously to see where she could look for loyal support, the young Queen turned with relief to the fatherly friend on whom she felt that she could absolutely rely. To his office of Judex Curiæ, or Deputy-Governor, she joined that of Commander-in-Chief of the military forces in Hungary, thus giving him the power which enabled him to become the arbiter of her own destiny, and of that of his native land.

To Maria Theresa the good understanding between her husband and Count Palffy had always been a source of comfort. They both took part in the deliberations with regard to the condition and disposal of the troops. Of the regiments available for immediate service, the greater number were guarding the eastern frontier of Hungary from possible attack by the victorious Turks. It was decided that half this force should be ordered to Bohemia to repel any hostile movement on the part of the Bavarian Elector. Other regiments were to be rapidly mobilized and dispatched to Moravia, Silesia, and Tyrol. It was no easy matter to bring together the men who were nominally under arms. Each province of the monarchy furnished its own contingent for the general defence of the realm and, in a haphazard way, found quarters for its soldiers when not on active service. In an army so composed there could be no uniform method of exercising the troops. Latterly they had so often been engaged on the losing side that they had no spirit left.

The Grand Duke of Tuscany threw himself vigorously into the work of concentrating the forces of the Austrian provinces. The appointment of his brother, Charles of Lorraine, a young and almost untried soldier, to the responsible position of Field-Marshal was not a step in the right direction. It was, however, excusable in the general dearth of experienced commanders. The same circumstance prompted Maria Theresa to order the release of the military leaders who had been expiating their failures in prison. They were not only set at liberty, but restored to their rank in the army. Neipperg resumed his friendly footing with the Grand Duke Francis. There were doubts as to the expediency of such lenient treatment, but the Queen maintained that gratitude would make the reinstated generals more zealous for her cause.

In the first difficult days of sovereignty the propitiatory attitude of Maria Theresa and her consort is worthy of all praise. They knew full well who had been the main instigators of the opposition they had encountered during the closing years of the late reign. But their accession to power aroused no petty desire for revenge. Both husband and wife determined to meet all and sundry in a spirit of friendliness. This was clearly the wisest course for the young politicians, who were playing for such high stakes as an undivided monarchy and an Imperial crown. Nevertheless, the complete ignoring of past injuries was unlooked for. It helped to break down prejudice against a female sovereign and to set the tide of popularity flowing in her direction.

Equally judicious was her treatment of the inhabitants of the rural districts and the poorer citizens of Vienna. The severe cold, which had been fatal to Charles VI, had also spoiled the vintage and caused widespread destitution. The peasants of the villages in the neighbourhood of the capital took it into their heads that all authority had come to an end with the death of the Emperor, and that until the Elector of Bavaria came to assume the government they were free to do as they liked. Accordingly they set to work to destroy the game, which had been preserved for the pleasure of his late Majesty. Steps had to be taken to assert the Queen's authority and stop the indiscriminate slaughter. But Maria Theresa would hear of no drastic measures. The number of animals hitherto preserved for sport was, she declared, excessive. It was natural that the small cultivators should embrace an apparent opportunity of getting rid of creatures which had ruined many a promising crop. The local magistrates were therefore instructed to assemble the offenders and explain to them their error, with assurance of the royal pardon for past misdeeds, and a solemn warning of the punishment that awaited future transgressors of the law. Temptation was, however, considerably lessened by Maria Theresa's order for an immediate reduction of the quantity of game preserved for the convenience of royal sportsmen. In the vicinity of villages the creatures of the chase were henceforward to be kept within reasonable limits.

Whilst taking thought for her peasant subjects, the Queen did not forget the poverty-stricken inhabitants of her capital. Lack of funds forbade any extensive scheme of relief. There were, however, trees that could be cut down, and supplies of fuel at the expense of the State kept life in some of the shivering citizens. But such aid as could be given was a mere drop in the bucket in comparison with the help required. So while the well-to-do members of the community "submitted to the late Emperor's decrees in a quiet, cordial, and respectful manner," at the lower end of the social scale disaffection steadily increased till, on November 22nd, 1740, it culminated in a serious riot.

This was the day on which the nobles and chief functionaries of Upper and Lower Austria did homage to Maria Theresa as sovereign Archduchess, and popular discontent had been fomented by agents of the Bavarian party. There was, however, no hitch in the proceedings within the Hofburg. The most important point in the speech of Maria Theresa to her Austrian vassals was the announcement that, with a view to the efficient administration of the affairs of the Archduchy and its provinces, she had appointed her consort co-Regent, albeit without infringing any of the provisions of the Pragmatic Sanction. In the event of her death while the heir to the throne was under age, the Grand Duke was to act as Regent during the minority.

The association of her husband with the work of the government was of supreme importance to Maria Theresa. To do anything apart from him was painful to her. She could not make him king, but she longed that he should share the honour and duties of her position. She also desired to give Francis the sort of status which would make it difficult for the Electors to ignore his claim to the Imperial dignity. By conferring upon him the Grand Mastership of the Order of the Golden Fleece she had already enabled him to take precedence of most of the princes of the Empire. Her kingdom of Bohemia was also an electorate. She proposed that Francis should represent her in the capacity of Elector, and vote for himself.

Early in November satisfactory responses to the notification of her accession reached Vienna " from the most distant parts of the hereditary countries." Everywhere there was "perfect tranquility and submission to the new government, and most lively zeal for the service of the Queen. . . . There seemed to be no room for any Power, be it never so ill-intentioned, to hope, or never so well-inclined, to fear, the least intestine disturbance in these parts."[1]

Superficial historians have represented the first weeks of the reign of Maria Theresa as a period spent by the Queen and her Ministers in a fool's paradise of fancied security, and occupied, if occupied at all, with mere trivialities of legislation. It is difficult to conceive how such perversion of fact ever obtained credence. It certainly did not originate with those who, from points of vantage, watched the beginning of the Queen's career. Before she had been on the throne a month Robinson discovered " a new spirit in the government. The Queen," he says, " gains the hearts of everybody. She shows an uncommon quickness in taking, a like judgment in digesting, and no less resolution in supporting the weightiest affairs of State. The Grand Duke is indefatigable in business." Another eye-witness[2] remarks that the Queen was hardly giving herself sufficient time for eating and sleeping.

In view of all that was achieved in a few brief weeks, unstinted praise is due to the young enthusiast whose grasp of the helm of government had proved unexpectedly firm. If courage, goodwill, perseverance, and determination could have afforded her any clue to the mazes of diplomacy, she would scarcely have acquiesced without protest in the foreign policy of her Ministers. Unfortunately it was in this supremely important department that she was most heavily handicapped by her lack of experience. The British Ambassador and other observant politicians repeatedly deplored the Austrian Court's over-confident expectation of the friendship of France. Their warnings passed unheeded. To the artless Queen, with her high moral standpoint, it was unthinkable that there would be any attempt on the part of that country to withhold the support for which her father had paid so great a price. She completely failed to perceive the danger that lurked behind the suave assurances of Cardinal Fleury that his Government was well-disposed to her cause, and that he much regretted delay in sending an answer to her notification, but without searching the archives in Paris he could not tell how to address a Queen of Hungary.

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[1] Robinson Papers.

[2] Count Silva-Tarouca.

The potentates with nothing to gain from a non-committal attitude found no difficulty in phrasing their replies. The Elector of Saxony, who was also King of Poland, was profuse in his expressions of affection. The young King of Prussia worded his letter "to the entire satisfaction of the Grand Duke." George II declared his intention of cultivating the friendship of the Queen, *and of fulfilling his engagements with regard to the Pragmatic Sanction*. Holland was prepared to give a similar pledge. The adhesion of Britain implied the support of Hanover with its electoral vote. The princes of the Empire were, with few exceptions, ready to acknowledge the Queen's title. The Empress Anne of Russia died about the same time as her ally Charles VI, but the Regents for the young Czar, Ivan IV, professed friendly motives. Equally favourable replies came from Sardinia, Venice, and the Pope. The despondency at Vienna gave place to quite unwarranted exultation. Robinson comments impatiently on "the pleasure of this people upon every letter they receive from one neighbouring Power or other, with the title of Queen, Sister, Majesty. It is not, I tell them, the acknowledging of the Queen, it is the acknowledgment of the Pragmatic Sanction and of the indivisibility of the late Emperor's possessions that is the present object." But those who looked only at the surface of things continued to believe that the sole cause for uneasiness lay in the attitude of the Elector of Bavaria.

From the first he declined to recognize Maria Theresa's right to any new title whatsoever, and claimed the whole Habsburg inheritance for himself. Reminded of his undertaking at the time of his marriage, he replied that he had merely renounced the rights of his wife, the younger daughter of Joseph I. His own claim, as a descendant of the daughter of Ferdinand I, was, he alleged, inalienable. He demanded that this Emperor's will should be exhibited to the Bavarian Ambassador, thus it would be put beyond dispute that Ferdinand had bequeathed the succession to the male heirs of his daughter if there should be any failure of male heirs to his sons. After some delay and much argument the will was produced, but the Elector's cause was not thereby advanced. The adjective to which such importance had been attributed proved to be not *male*, but *legitimate*.

The least wary of governments might have been roused to suspicion when, instead of professing himself satisfied with the inspection of the document, the Elector recalled his envoy from Vienna. And this while Fleury seemed no nearer the end of his researches in the archives. But Bartenstein still pooh-poohed the idea of any collusion between the two Powers. Even a letter from Frederick of Prussia to the Grand Duke gave rise to no uneasiness, although the writer commented on the perilous position of the Queen of Hungary and volunteered to come to her support, with the significant addition that the Court must be quick with its resolutions.

Rapidity of decision was the last thing to be expected from the Court while its principal thought was to be acknowledged by France, and thereafter to maintain a strict neutrality. Without French support, Charles Albert of Bavaria would be forced to abandon his claims. Neutrality meant time to effect improvement in the condition of the army and the finances.

Had Fleury's control of the foreign policy of his country been as undisputed as heretofore, Bartenstein's blind confidence in his fidelity might have been fully justified. As it happened, an influence diametrically opposed to that of the Cardinal had, for some time, been at work at the Court of Versailles. It was the influence of Charles Fouquet, Comte de Belleisle, the persistent advocate of aggressive measures for extending the power of the House of Bourbon. At the French Court, "Belleisle was thought to be a man of supreme skill both in war and in diplomacy. He was certainly fit for many things and full of ambition to distinguish himself. With grand schemes, with fiery notions and convictions, which captivate men's minds more easily than eloquence,"[1] he had a considerable following, especially amongst the younger noblemen.

The more vigilant European statesmen had an inkling of the strength of this war party and surmised its hostility to the provisions of the Pragmatic Sanction. But neither Sinzendorf nor Bartenstein could read between the lines of the eagerly expected letter from Louis XV. It did not reach Vienna till three months after Maria Theresa's accession. She was therein addressed by the title to which she laid claim; but albeit her need of help was becoming urgent, there was no reference to the solemn guarantee given by the French Government to the late Emperor. Notwithstanding this disappointment, Bartenstein persuaded the Conference that, if the aforesaid Government did not actively support the Queen, it would at least exert a restraining influence over her enemies.

To impose upon Maria Theresa at this period of her history was extremely easy. Experience alone could open her eyes to the depraved condition of the international morality of her times. Even when experience had given her considerable skill in manipulating the political forces of Europe, she adhered, with far more consistency than is generally supposed, to the conviction of her girlhood that there is not one standard of honour for individuals and another for nations. If it was a disgraceful thing for a man to go back on his word, it was, she maintained, equally so for a government to repudiate its engagements.

Accustomed to look upon Austria as the motive power of the German Empire, it was naturally difficult either for the Queen or her Ministers to grasp the fact that the policy of France and of Europe generally was being determined by the action of Prussia. King Frederick's proposal to ally himself with Austria was regarded at Vienna rather as an expression of goodwill than a serious overture.

As formerly stated, this offer was contained in a letter to the Grand Duke Francis. The reply was mainly an appeal to Frederick in his capacity of Elector of Brandenburg to support his friend's candidature at the impending election of a new emperor. A friendly message from Maria Theresa was enclosed. "The dispatch of a letter from my beloved husband to Your Majesty prompts me," she wrote, "to unite with him in his petition. Your accordance of the very great favour which we look for will pledge me as well as my consort to a lasting sense of indebtedness. Will it therefore please Your Majesty to receive the assurance that I will hold myself ready on every available opportunity to make what return I can for complaisantness in this matter."

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[1] Carlyle, *Frederick the Great.*

The writer little imagined that her correspondent was verging on a decision to compete for the Imperial throne himself. Still, he was not unwilling to forego ambition in this direction if more substantial advantages could be secured in exchange. The avowal of Maria Theresa's fervent desire that the highest of all titles should be conferred upon her husband suggested to Frederick a likely way of striking a bargain with her.

That His Majesty of Prussia had some warlike enterprise in view had become evident before the Queen of Hungary preferred her request for his vote. Her hint at a possible *quid pro quo* may indicate her belief in the report that her neighbour was preparing to take forcible possession of Jülich and Berg, and her willingness that Austria should cease interposing obstacles to the Prussian claim to these Westphalian duchies. She had not her father's reasons for favouring the rival pretensions of the Elector Palatine. Like the ecclesiastical Electors of Cologne and Treves, he had taken his stand on the side of the Elector of Bavaria.

In diplomatic circles there had been much wagging of heads and tongues when the new King of Prussia made his appearance on the European stage (May 31st, 1740). He was twenty-eight years old, but hitherto, save for one tragic episode, his life had been completely overshadowed by his father's dominant personality. Hence the most discerning of statesmen could not forecast the part he was likely to play. Sporadic manifestations of energy and determination were not lacking during the first weeks of his reign. But, on the whole, he seemed more intent on watching the movements of other actors than in coming forward himself.

England and Spain were at loggerheads, ostensibly over the "Jenkins' Ear" incident. France might join in the fray at any moment. The Emperor was crippled by the unlucky Turkish War. There was promise of keen competition for the alliance of Prussia. There was corresponding anxiety to fathom the designs of Prussia's King. Anxiety increased to fever-heat when, the Emperor having disappeared from the scene, Frederick's military preparations became more and more extensive. Officers on furlough were recalled, regiments ordered to be in readiness to march. Presently it was rumoured that the destination of the troops was not the Rhine but Silesia.

With Frederick's protestations fresh in their minds, Maria Theresa and her Ministers were chary of accepting the alarmist statements of the Austrian Ambassador at Berlin. But as a precaution Marquis Botta, an Italian diplomatist in Her Majesty's service, was dispatched to the Prussian capital in order to find out with what purpose the King had assumed so menacing an attitude and, if possible, to come to an understanding with him on a basis of mutual good faith and helpfulness between Austria and Prussia.

Journeying to Berlin, Botta found the highways wellnigh blocked with troops marching in the direction of Silesia. The King tried to put him off with assurances that his main object was to guard a vulnerable portion of the Queen of Hungary's dominions. Botta, however, advised the Austrian Government to put no trust in Frederick's asseverations, for within a fortnight his army would be across the frontier.

The Prussian Ambassador at Vienna, no longer sworn to secrecy, gave an equally disquieting version of Frederick's designs. His master was, he alleged, equally convinced of the inevitability of war and of the likelihood that Prussia's just claims would be ignored if her King did not steal a march on the enemies of Austria by occupying Silesia. The irritating assertion that Frederick's contemplated step was all in the interest of the Queen was repeated.

It was a rude awakening from the dream of peace and neutrality in which Maria Theresa and her counsellors had indulged for the space of six weeks. Orders were issued for putting the threatened province in a state of defence, orders which it would be very difficult to carry out, since winter had made the mountain-roads between Bohemia and Silesia almost impassable. Urgent protests were addressed to Frederick. His former friend, Francis of Lorraine, besought him to withhold his help until the reputed enemies of Austria had declared themselves. If such existed, the proposed occupation of Silesia would inevitably precipitate their attack. Much else was written to the same effect.

Frederick, fully persuaded in his own mind, was not to be moved by any remonstrance. On December 8th, his Lord Marshal, Count Gotter, was sent off to Vienna to lay before the Queen the definite and final proposals of the importunate prince who had constituted himself her guardian. Briefly stated, they were an offer of the Imperial crown for Francis and of the military and financial strength of Prussia against the opponents of Maria Theresa, in return for which the cession of a considerable portion of Silesia was demanded. Rejection of these terms would be tantamount to a declaration of war.

Having obtained an audience of the Grand Duke of Tuscany, Gotter proceeded to explain his errand. The Duke replied that the Queen had not the power to grant away a morsel of that succession which was so strongly and indivisibly entailed. "For my part," he added, "not for the Imperial crown, not even for the whole world, will I sacrifice one right or one inch of the Queen's lawful possessions."[1] On ascertaining that the Prussian troops were doubtless already in Silesia, Maria Theresa refused to receive Gotter or to treat with the King unless he would withdraw his forces from her territory. Negotiations were not immediately broken off, but they were obviously foredoomed to failure. Of the former King of Prussia it was said that, while he often put his finger on the trigger of his gun he seldom fired it. With Frederick, on the contrary, threat and performance were simultaneous. Before Gotter had time to discharge his mission, the King had left Berlin and was travelling southward in the wake of his army. "Sire, you are going to ruin the House of Austria, and plunge yourself into destruction," said Botta, as his last interview with Frederick drew to a close. The latter would not consent even to delay the execution of the project. The Rubicon, he, said, was already crossed. To the French Ambassador the departing King remarked, " I believe I am going to play your game. If the aces fall to me, we will share the profits." Thus lightly did he commit himself to an enterprise, " which proved unexpectedly momentous, and shaped the whole remainder of his days for him." It changed the tenor of another life quite as completely—that of the young Queen whom he had ruthlessly forced into a position of danger. On December 16th, 1740, he passed the boundary line between her country and his own, a very portent of strife with the long-drawn-out war of the Austrian Succession trailing behind him.

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[1] Robinson to Lord Harrington, December 21st, 1740.

By dint of repeating over and over again that his claim to the Silesian principalities of Jägerndorf, Liegnitz, Brieg, and Wohlau was incontestable, Frederick induced not a few of his contemporaries to believe in it. It would have been a difficult claim to uphold in a court of law. As a pretext for war it served the King's purpose admirably, especially when bolstered up by fictions about guarding the rest of the province for the benefit of the rightful owner. Frederick's private view of the subject may be gathered from his *Histoire de mon Temps*. When he summarizes the motives that prompted his *coup de main*, he makes little account of the necessity for maintaining Prussian rights. Looking back, he sees on the one hand a young king with ample military and financial resources, with ambition urging him to make a name for himself, and with resentment at the cavalier fashion in which his father had been treated by the Emperor, impelling him to seize every opportunity of extending his kingdom and raising it to the rank of a first-class Power. On the other hand there was, he says, a young, inexperienced Queen with a disputed title, her army little more than a figment, her revenue uncertain. Consequently she was not a formidable enemy to attack. She had a narrow strip of boundary in common with himself; for the northern part of Silesia formed a sort of triangular wedge, separating the Saxon and Polish dominions of Augustus III, and having its apex in Brandenburg. The possession, not only of this wedge, but of the province as a whole, would mean a vast increase of wealth and safety for the kingdom of Prussia.

It might conceivably be made a stepping-stone to the realization of another darling project of the Hohenzollern rulers, namely, the annexation of that portion of Poland which separated the two component parts of their kingdom—the Electorate of Brandenburg, and the Duchy of East Prussia. With the possibility of achieving great things spurring him on, Frederick was ready to take tremendous risks. For he had no allies, and a single lost battle might prove decisive. There was, indeed, a remote chance that he might gain his object without actual warfare—not however while he negotiated from Berlin. Hence his decision to seize the coveted province first, and treat with Maria Theresa afterwards.

A contemporary political cartoon represents the two rulers playing chess. The Queen would have been more than human if she had not resented the unfair play which enabled her opponent to cry " check " at the very beginning of the game. Her own impulse was flatly to refuse his proposals and then to put forth every effort to checkmate him. But Sinzendorf, her Foreign Minister, still shrank from a declaration of war. " I appealed to him," says Robinson, " what the impartial world would think of the proceedings of this Court, in not knowing, in its present circumstances at home, and more dangerous circumstances abroad, how to find one expedient or another." There was no definite breaking off with the King of Prussia till the end of January, 1741. Meanwhile, he was carrying all before him. His Protestantism commended him to a largely Protestant population. Ability to vouch for his friendly intentions by the fact that he was in constant communication with the Queen was another asset in his favour.

In Austria military preparations were certainly pushed on, but the troops were not sent forward with anything like the necessary rapidity. The nomination of the commander did more credit to the heart than the head of Francis of Lorraine. With the view of granting his former instructor an opportunity to recover the prestige lost in the Turkish War the appointment was given to Neipperg. It would have been infinitely better to have extended the responsibility of Browne, an able officer of Irish extraction, already in command in Silesia. Before the campaign began, Neipperg's leisurely movements were a cause of irritation to the sovereign lady at Vienna. In one of her letters she says, "I can see quite well that with us everything is done far too slowly. This will be our ruin in the long run. There is no haste to accomplish even the things of paramount importance."

To the three months' Queen there was but one ray of light in the opening weeks of 1741, namely, the acknowledgment of her title by the French Government. In all other directions the storm-clouds were gathering. A protracted war with Prussia was inevitable. Saxony was raising suspicious objections to the right of the Grand Duke of Tuscany to exercise the electoral vote of Bohemia. There was a further protest against his position as co-Regent. The Elector of Bavaria was likely to prove a formidable rival for the Imperial crown. "The Termagant of Spain" was once more on the warpath, and impatient to make good her revived claim to an Italian throne for her second son, Don Philip. Domestic grief was added to the political anxieties of Maria Theresa. On January 25th Robinson reports that "the younger of the two little Archduchesses was taken ill about two of the clock this morning and died at noon, much in the same manner and with the same symptoms as the Queen's eldest daughter, who died in June last. This affliction, with so many others, comes very hard upon the Queen, who is near her time of lying-in."

The events of the ensuing weeks were not calculated to strengthen her expectation that other monarchs would resent the King of Prussia's cynical disregard for international rights and rally to her defence. A growing conviction that the only support on which dependence might be placed was that of her own subjects, brought with it an almost overwhelming dread lest the birth of another daughter should alienate them from her cause. Looking back on those days of agonized suspense, she tells how courage and calmness were attained by fervent prayer. Inspired by the words of her patron saint, Theresa, she ofttimes invoked the mediation of Saint Joseph. "I cannot remember," writes the great reformer of convents, "that I ever desired anything by his means which he hath failed to obtain for me; and it is like to amaze me when I consider the great favours which Almighty God hath done me by means of this blessed saint, and the dangers, both of soul and body, out of which he hath delivered me."

To Theresa the Queen there was also given deliverance from danger. On March 13th, 1741, past and present troubles were forgotten in the mother's exultation over her first-born son, in the monarch's profound relief in the advent of the long-desired male heir of the House of Habsburg. The mere sight of him was reassuring—a veritable young Hercules, weighing 16 lb. 2 oz., as was duly noted in the periodicals of the day. "Her Majesty's subjects had now a precious pledge and hope of their future security." In the small hours of the bleak March morning they crowded round the Hofburg, and their noisy demonstrations of pleasure were as music in the ears of the Queen. It was, she often said, the second happiest day of her life.

It was the day, not only of the infant's birth, but of his christening. In the prenatal discussion of names Maria Theresa had confirmed the general anticipation that, if the new-comer were a prince, he should be called after the grandfather who had missed the fulfilment of his most ardent desire by a few short months. It was the only decision that would have found favour with Empress Elizabeth. But as the time for the ceremony drew near, the Queen set herself to gain her mother's approval of a change in the child's chief name. She wished to make acknowledgment of her thankfulness for the granting of her petition. If she had another son, she promised that he should be called Charles, but the first-born was to bear the name of the saint whom she had so often invoked in her distress.

Joseph, accordingly, was the appellation bestowed on the little Archduke in the course of a stately service, in which the Papal Nuncio was assisted by no fewer than sixteen bishops. The sponsors were Pope Benedict XIV, the Empress Elizabeth, and the kinsman who was King of Poland. The infant was no sooner baptized than his father created him a Knight of the Golden Fleece. Public rejoicings continued for a whole week. The pious sentiment which had prompted the change of name appealed to one section of the community. Another approved of reviving the remembrance of the popular reign of Joseph I. Ambassadors extraordinary announced the good tidings to every European Court, save that of Prussia. Count Wenzel Kaunitz, the envoy to the Italian States, was destined to become known as the greatest politician of the reign of Maria Theresa. He was equally prominent in the reign of her eldest son, when the latter succeeded to the throne as Joseph II.

CHAPTER VIII

DEFEAT OF THE AUSTRIAN ARMY AT MOLLWITZ—CORONATION OF MARIA THERESA AT PRESSBURG

MARIA THERESA'S decision to invite Augustus of Poland and Saxony to stand sponsor for her son, if a son should be born, was eminently prudent. His sphere of influence had been extended by the marriage of his daughter to the King of the Two Sicilies. Until a new emperor should be elected he held the office of Imperial Vicar. In this capacity also the Queen of Hungary eagerly desired his friendship. Like Frederick of Prussia, Augustus had taken steps to ascertain if he could safely aspire to the purple himself. With far more reluctance than Frederick he abandoned the idea when it became evident that the choice of the other Electors would lie between Francis of Lorraine and Charles Albert of Bavaria.

From the year 1714 onwards, a series of secret treaties had pledged the King of France to support the candidature of the Elector of Bavaria when the time came to choose a successor to Charles VI. Certain of the agreements had furthermore provided that France should take the part of Charles Albert if he decided to claim the right of sovereignty in the Habsburg countries. On the strength of these promises the Elector refused to identify himself with the other German princes on whose behalf the Imperial Diet accepted the Pragmatic Sanction in 1732. He was naturally taken aback when, later on, the famous Act of Succession was guaranteed by France. But Fleury was ready with assurances that his King would not uphold Maria Theresa if another claimant proved to have a better title to her father's dominions. Interpreting in his own favour this oracular utterance, the Elector did not hesitate to come forward as the rival not only of Francis of Lorraine, but of the daughter of Charles VI.

When the young Princess showed that she considered her own right indisputable, Charles Albert made anxious inquiry as to the intentions of the French Government. Fleury gave him to understand that there was no reason why he should not compete for Imperial honours, but concessions to Bavaria would have ended there had the Cardinal been free to follow his own judgment. Obviously the way to avert a European war was to support the title of the Queen of Hungary. It had, however, become needful that Fleury should take into account the policy of Belleisle, divergent as it was from his own. Eventually he ceased to oppose it. Yet so long as it was to the interest of France to avoid a breach with Austria, the Cardinal continued to temporize with the Courts of Vienna and Munich.

The main plank in Belleisle's scheme for giving France the control of European politics was the dismemberment of Austria. His ultimate object was to bring about such a transference of Habsburg provinces to Prussia, Bavaria, and Saxony as would leave Maria Theresa with little more than Hungary for her portion. Thus the Empire would no longer be at the beck of one preponderating Power, for Germany would comprise four kingdoms of nearly equal strength. Each would naturally be jealous of the others, and France might dictate to them all. She would also be free to consolidate her own power by annexing Luxemburg and the Netherlands. Well might Frederick of Prussia assert that, by invading Silesia, he was playing the game of the French King.

The first indication that Louis XV had begun to play for his own hand was the elevation of Belleisle to the rank of Marshal of France, and his appointment as Ambassador-Extraordinary to the German Courts. His primary object was to secure the rejection of the husband of Maria Theresa when the members of the Electoral College should assemble at Frankfort to choose a new emperor. Frederick II had begun to put out feelers for some recognition of his claims in Silesia on the part of the French Government. But the cautious Fleury insisted on awaiting further developments. It would, he argued, be time enough to countenance the

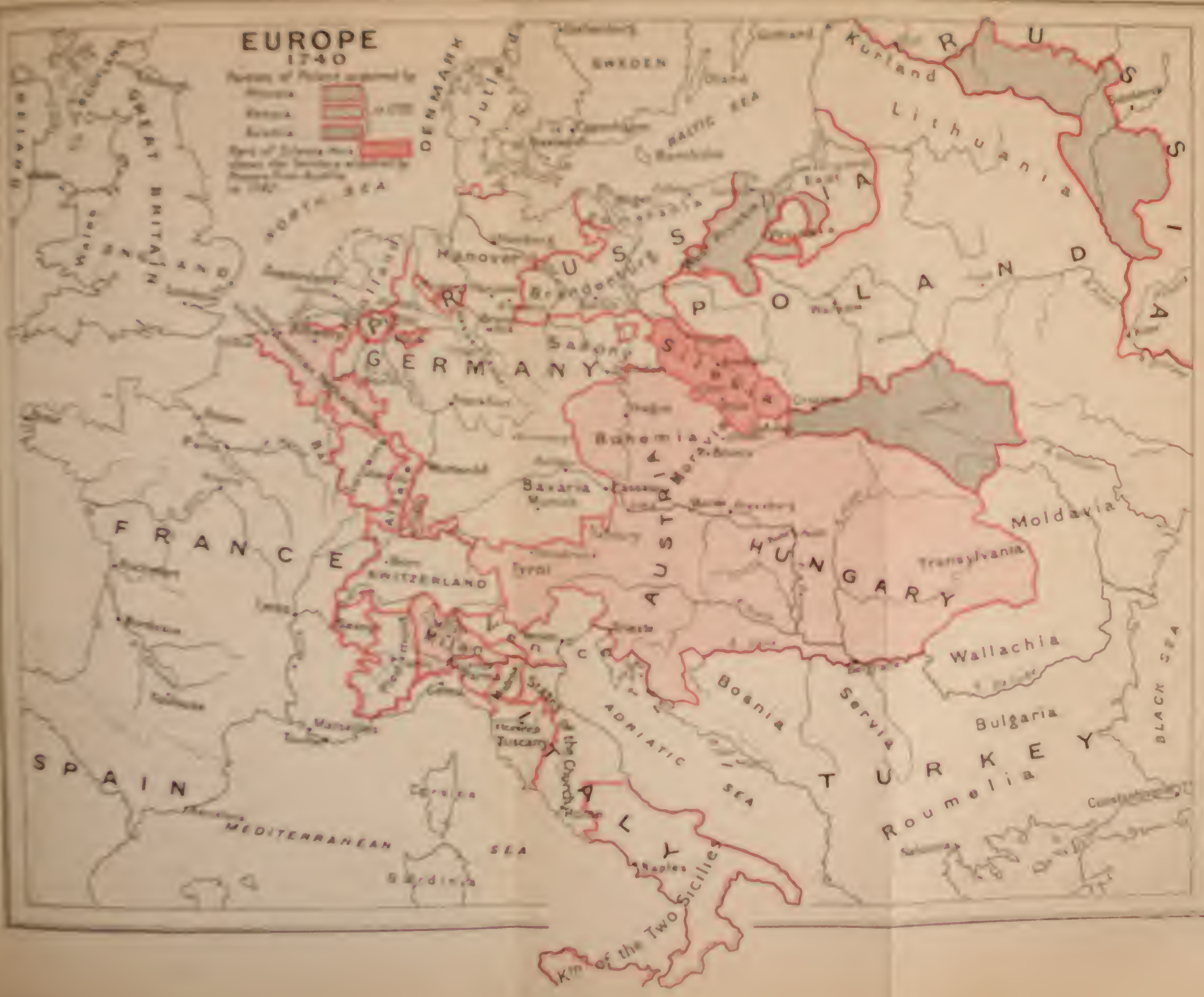
Prussian King when he had shown himself capable of maintaining his hazardous position.

To Frederick's satisfaction his overtures to the British Government were more favourably received. He was more drawn to an alliance with the Sea Powers and Austria than with France, if only Maria Theresa could be persuaded to satisfy his demands. She, however, refused to cede any portion of the disputed province, even after the defeat of her army at Mollwitz—the first battle of the war (April 10th, 1741). At the first onset the Austrian cavalry, habituated to active service, put to flight the right wing of the Prussian horse, and so nearly snatched a victory that Frederick quitted the field in despair. When he reappeared later on it was to find that the charge of the Prussian infantry, under the command of Von Schwerin, had proved irresistible, and that the enemy were in full retreat.

Mollwitz had laid a solid foundation for the future prestige of the Prussian army, but it did not extricate the King from his insecure and unrecognized position. He therefore bespoke the mediation of England, and renewed his offer to make peace with Austria if Lower Silesia were definitely assigned to him. The British Ambassador at Vienna was charged to leave no stone unturned in order to convince the Austrian Court of the wisdom of accepting the proffered terms.

Robinson acted promptly on his instructions, though he cannot be said to have made much impression. His influence would have been greater if he had persistently advocated the same course of action. That, however, was impossible for a man who was under the necessity of serving two masters. The British Government naturally put British interests first. But its accredited agent had also to consider the wishes of George II, who was mainly concerned for the welfare of Hanover.

It was an unkind fate that, at a period of international crisis, compelled a mediocre prince to double the parts of British Sovereign and German Elector. To the heroine of the European stage, who played her single part with all her heart and soul, it was exasperating beyond measure not to know for certain in what guise George II would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Kgm of the Two Sicilies
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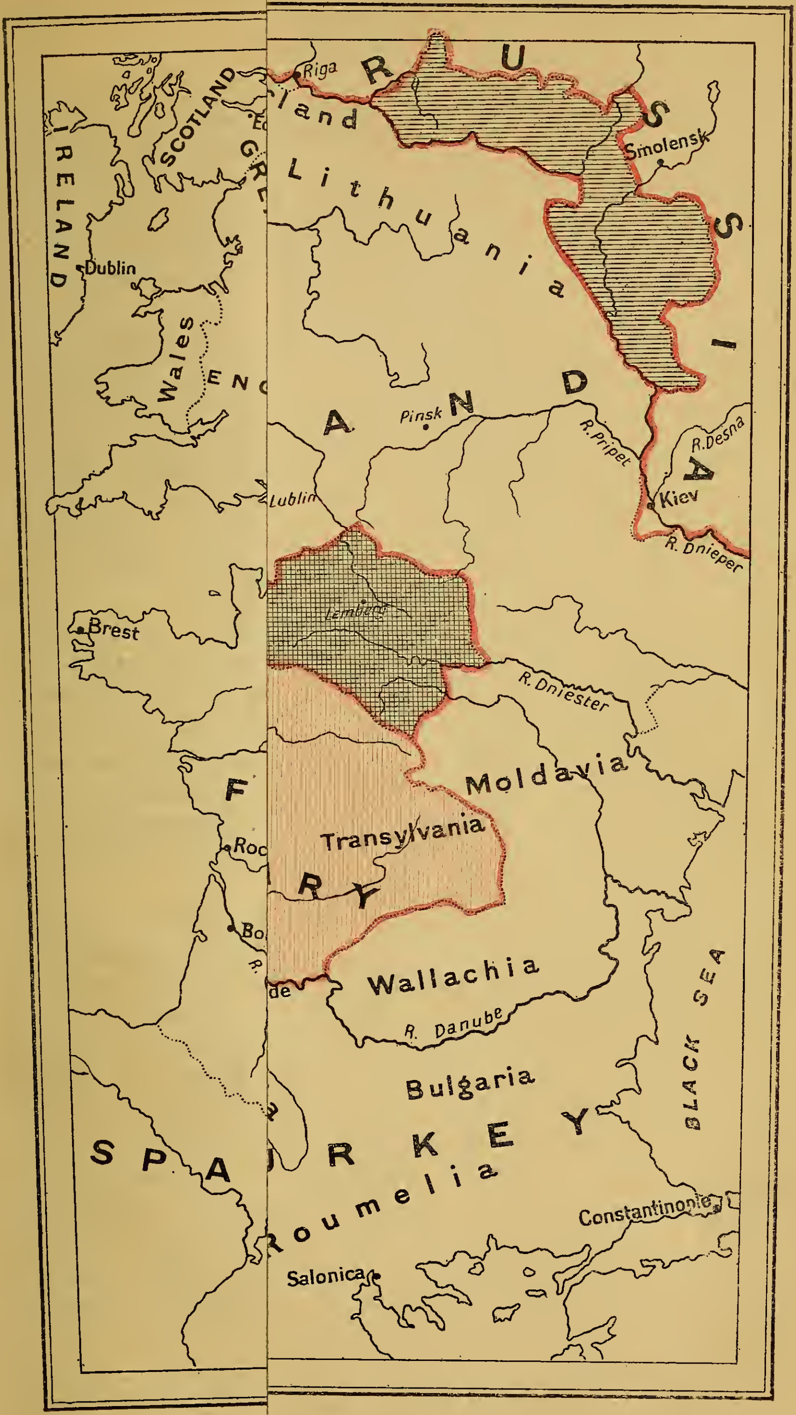Riga
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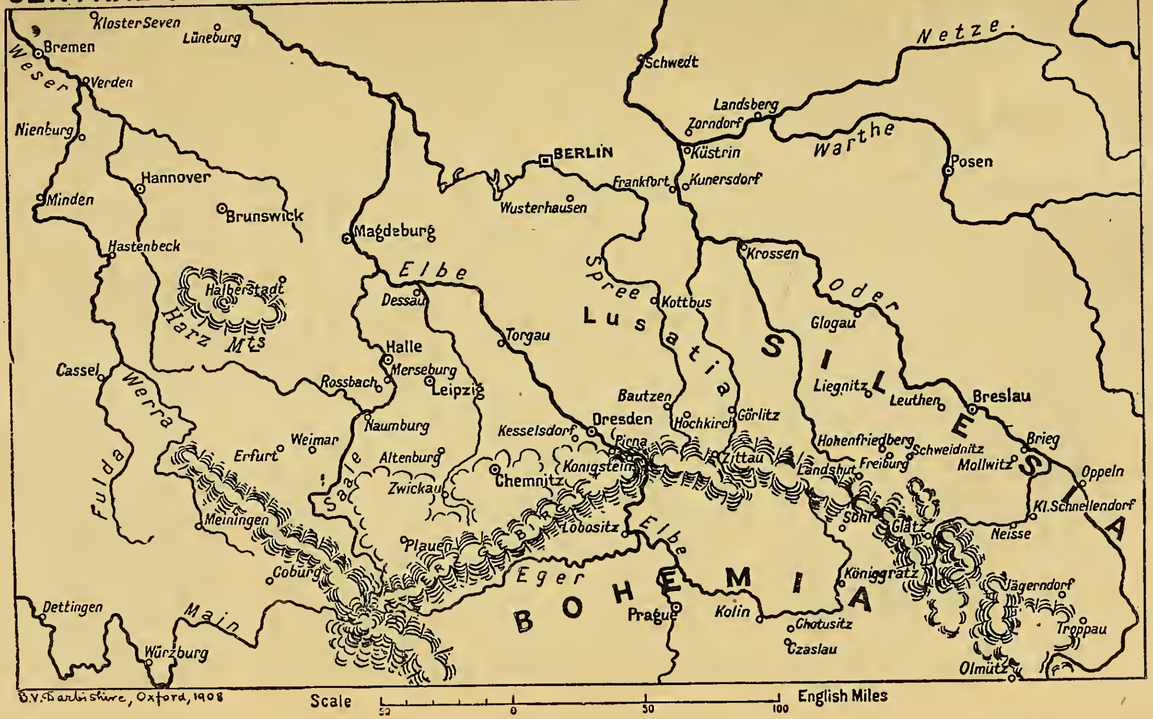
CENTRAL GERMANY To illustrate War of Austrian Succession and Seven Years War



B.V. Darbishire, Oxford, 1908

appear. At one time he posed as the chivalrous redresser of her wrongs; at another he seemed but one more messenger of Satan sent to buffet her.

As Elector of Hanover, George strongly objected to any fresh acquisition of territory by the neighbouring ruler of Brandenburg; he therefore assured Maria Theresa that she had little to fear from Frederick's irruption into Austria. The intruder would soon be dislodged by their united efforts. This was advice after the Queen's own heart. She was further encouraged by hearing of the grant of troops and money in response to the King's appeal to Parliament on her behalf. Great was her indignation when George II suddenly abandoned the part of champion, and Robinson, as the mouthpiece of both masters, declared that compliance with the Prussian demand was inevitable.

The change was due to another astute move on the part of Frederick. In May, 1741, George II proceeded to Hanover to put himself at the head of the auxiliaries assembled in the Electorate. So threatening did his attitude become that Prussian reinforcements destined for Silesia were diverted to join the forces which Frederick had placed near Magdeburg, under Leopold of Anhalt-Dessau, in order to hold Hanover and Saxony in check. The hint at a possible invasion of his beloved Hanover was not thrown away on George II. Prudence suggested that it might be well to refrain from further opposition when his nephew laid claim to a slice of Habsburg territory. And though he continued to organize reinforcements for the Austrian army, he became less eager to exceed the stipulated number of auxiliaries, and temporarily abandoned the idea of taking the field himself.

The inexperienced Queen of Hungary failed to grasp the fact that an entirely new situation had been created by her defeat. So far the most encouraging incident of the new reign was the birth of Archduke Joseph. In the general satisfaction called forth by that event, the lost battle, which would otherwise have been a sore grievance to Her Majesty's subjects, was relegated to the domain of minor calamities. When Maria Theresa reappeared in public to attend the Thanksgiving Service for the safety of herself and her infant, "there was no proof of duty and attachment omitted by the people. Some of the nobility were at the expense of three, four, or even six thousand florins in illuminations. What was most remarkable was that in such crowded streets, where such numbers of Turks and Prussian deserters were straggling and gazing with the common people, the Queen, accompanied with the two Archduchesses[1] went in an open landau, with two horses and only two servants, through the whole town at night. The Grand Duke was on horseback with another party of courtiers, and Prince Charles on foot."[2]

This spontaneous demonstration of loyalty and the appreciative response of the Sovereign ushers in a new epoch of Habsburg history. Not for generations had there been anything of the nature of personal and intimate relationship between the reigning Cæsar and his subjects. In Vienna Charles VI was particularly careful to entrench himself behind his rampart of ceremonious observance. Apart from the Court, the city had no life of its own. Its inhabitants therefore were all eyes and ears for the doings and sayings of the Imperial household. Maria Theresa's little digressions from conventional routine, and frankly expressed sympathy with the suffering that came under her observation, had given her, from childhood onwards, a place of her own in the estimation of the citizens. Their affections had for a while been alienated by the mischief-making agents of the Elector of Bavaria, but the birth of an heir sufficed to reinstate his mother in popular favour.

A brighter prospect opened before her when, not only from among the residents of Vienna, but from divers parts of her scattered domains, men began to come forward with offers of money or personal service in support of her cause. Particularly gratifying to her were the evidences of Hungarian loyalty. The majority of her counsellors advocated caution in dealing with the Magyars. They reminded the Queen that Hungarians who had rebelled against Joseph I were still exiles in Turkey. Of a surety they would seek to prejudice their fellow-countrymen against the new Government. They might even incite the Turks to begin a fresh war with Austria. Fortunately her trust in Palffy and his powerful following combined with other reasons to prevent the Queen from being misled as to the real source of her strength.

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[1] Her daughter and sister.

[2] Robinson to Lord Harrington.

Her army was in urgent need of reinforcement, and the organization of regular troops proceeded slowly. Prominent Hungarians proposed to obtain the royal sanction for the enlistment of companies of free-lances, who could be placed at the immediate disposal of Neipperg. The Austrian authorities looked askance at the suggestion of armed Hungarian irregulars. Nevertheless the offer was accepted. Amongst the leaders of the free companies, who were presently on their way to Silesia, was Baron Francis von Trenck, a kinsman of Frederick von Trenck, the far-famed prisoner of King Frederick of Prussia. For dare-devil courage and murderous ferocity no swashbucklers of romance could vie with Francis Trenck and his regiment of pandours. They were inspected by Maria Theresa as they passed through Vienna. Doubtless she took credit to herself for enlisting the pugnacious contingent.

Incalculable advantage was obtained by a well-timed treaty with the Porte. Enemies of the Habsburg heiress had pictured her involved in continuous struggles with Turkey and Hungary, and consequently unable to carry on war with other countries. Their hopes in this direction seemed likely to be frustrated. On May 18th, 1741, the Hungarian Diet obeyed the Queen's summons to meet at Pressburg. Its first business was to decide the order of ceremony to be observed on Her Majesty's arrival in the city, and on her ensuing coronation. Deputies from the four estates of the realm were charged with Hungary's formal invitation to Maria Theresa to come and receive the crown of St. Stephen. Her request that her consort should be appointed co-Regent in Hungary as well as in Austria was debated, but it was deemed expedient to leave the matter in abeyance until after the coronation. Thus there would be no question that only as the husband of the Queen could Francis claim to be Regent.

In Vienna the delegates were received with all the graciousness befitting their message. Their spokesman addressed the Queen in the official Latin, and she replied fluently in the same speech. The coronation was fixed for

June 25th. Pending her arrival, they drew up a "postulate," or list of grievances for which redress was sought. Disapproving of certain demands, Maria Theresa had a counter list of proposals prepared for submission to the Diet.

Meanwhile Belleisle, after journeying with much pomp and circumstance from one electoral Court to another, had appeared at the head-quarters of the King of Prussia at Strehlen, and found this townlet such an excellent centre for his negotiations that he was in no hurry to depart. Frederick's victory had furnished the advocate of Bourbon supremacy with an unrivalled opportunity for the prosecution of his elaborate design. Within a few weeks it was well on the way to execution. On May 28th, 1741, the agreement known as the Treaty of Nymphenburg pledged France and Spain to support the Elector of Bavaria's candidature for the vacant Imperial throne. From both countries he likewise received the promise of a grant of money, while France undertook to send an army to co-operate with the Bavarians in the forthcoming struggle with Austria for the possession of Bohemia. In return for this friendly interposition the Elector bound himself not to use his Imperial power to deprive France of territories she might see fit to occupy within the Empire, or Spain of her projected annexations in Italy.

While effecting the co-operation of three rulers, all of whom had designs on Habsburg possessions, Belleisle did not neglect other possibilities. His first overtures to the King of Prussia met with scant encouragement, for Mollwitz had made Frederick more independent. He did not refuse to vote for Charles Albert of Bavaria, neither was he averse from curtailing the power of Austria in Germany, but he did not desire that the result should be a corresponding increase in the power of France. His views found expression in the communications addressed by him to George II; at the same time he asserted that he would be forced to ally himself with France if Maria Theresa persisted in refusing his terms.

Fearful lest Hanover should be attacked by the combined forces of France and Prussia, George II hastened to emulate the French and Spanish kings by dispatching a special envoy to the Prussian camp.

The diplomatist sent to Silesia to counterbalance the influence of Belleisle was John Carmichael, Lord Hyndford. A shrewd, far-sighted Scotsman, upright in character, attractive in personality, with a thorough-going British antipathy to France and her rulers, Hyndford was not ill-equipped for the office of mediator between Austria and Prussia.

Frederick had naturally resented George II's recent appeal to Parliament for funds to enable Maria Theresa to cope with the invader of Silesia; but, according to Hyndford, his master's apparent opposition to Prussia was merely veiled hostility to France. What the King of England really desired was a speedy end of the struggle between his nephew and the Queen of Hungary. Then both would be available for a coalition against France.

The mere fact that both George II and Louis XV deemed it worth while to send extraordinary envoys to him convinced Frederick that he was nearer his goal than he had imagined. He readily agreed to the mediation which Hyndford proposed to undertake in conjunction with the British Ambassador at Vienna. At the same time he determined not to abate his demand for the whole of Lower Silesia, including Breslau, the capital of the province. Robinson duly renewed his attempts to bring about a reconsideration of Maria Theresa's decision to concede nothing to the disturber of her peace. From the stage of refusing point-blank to listen to the hated proposal, she passed to the stage of making a few grudging concessions. Frederick characterized her offer as "impertinent," and on June 4th agreed to sign a convention with France. The long-suffering Robinson was directed to make still more urgent representations to the Queen of Hungary, and ascertain if by any means she might be brought to the point of yielding before the ratification of the dreaded compact. When these instructions reached Sir Thomas he had just returned from Pressburg. He was out of favour with the Court and had received no invitation to the ceremonies in the Hungarian capital. But he had gone all the same, determined to see as much as possible.

Six days before the coronation all Vienna flocked to the banks of the Danube to witness the departure of the Queen with her husband, daughter, sister, and a numerous retinue. The most attractive route from Vienna to Hungary is by way of the river. In the eighteenth century it was also the most frequented one. Travellers were accommodated in "little vessels that might properly be called wooden houses, having in them almost all the conveniences of a palace—stoves in the chambers, kitchens, etcetera. They were rowed by twelve men, or more, with an incredible swiftness, so that in the same day you had the pleasure of a vast variety of prospects."[1]

The boats on which Maria Theresa and her suite embarked were propelled by more than a dozen rowers. They were decorated with a profusion of flags showing the Hungarian arms and the Hungarian colours—red, green, and white. Consideration for Hungarian sentiment was also apparent in the furnishing of the boats and the garb of the crews. In five hours the "incredibly swift" oarsmen had brought the Queen to Petronell, four-and-twenty miles from Vienna. Here she spent the night at a castle belonging to Count Traun, who was destined to play an important part in the military history of her reign. Next morning the voyage was resumed. Near the Hungarian frontier Maria Theresa and the majority of her companions went on shore and continued the journey in carriages.

On the further side of the boundary a magnificent tent had been erected for the reception of the Queen. Gorgeously attired Magyar noblemen and holders of State offices were present on horseback. Bishops and other ecclesiastics had come in their coaches. Esterhazy, the Primate of Hungary, welcomed Her Majesty in a Latin oration. To this she had no difficulty in responding. Then the procession was marshalled, and wended its way along the right bank of the Danube, amidst cheering spectators who had preferred the spaciousness of the river-side to the crowded city streets. Lit up by the westering sun, Pozsony (or Pressburg), on the opposite bank was looking its fairest as the cavalcade turned to cross the bridge. Situated on a spur of the Little Carpathians the streets wind upward to the castle, standing four-square on its wind-swept plateau. An outbreak of fire in 1811 has left little but outer walls to testify to the massive grandeur of the royal residence of former days. On the evening of June 20th, 1741, the cannon thundered from the ramparts, and banners streamed from the towers at the four corners of the fortress-like structure to which Maria Theresa was drawing near. She was no stranger to Hungary, but this, her first appearance as ruler of the country, was a veritable triumph. It was meet that the state carriage provided for her use should recall the chariot of a victorious Roman general. Francis of Lorraine was seated beside his consort, but former goings and comings had made him so familiar to the Pressburgers that his reappearance excited little comment. All eyes were fastened on the youthful figure of the Queen. Her mourning had been temporarily laid aside. Her white robe, with its blue and gold embroideries, was fashioned in the Hungarian style. No sphinx-like royalty this, but a woman of vivid personality and singular grace and charm who responded with unfeigned satisfaction to the curious oft-repeated greeting, "Long live our Lady the King!"

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[1] Lady Mary Wortley Montagu.

The following day members of both Chambers of the Diet were bidden to the Castle and received by the Sovereign. The Hungarian Chancellor, Count Ludwig Batthyany, addressed them in their own tongue. Then, in her fluent Latin, the Queen outlined the proposals which had been agreed upon in Vienna. Amongst other things the office of Palatine was to be filled immediately. Measures were to be taken to restore prosperity in those parts of the kingdom which had suffered most in recent wars and outbreaks of pestilence. The need of a larger army was urgent. It was desired that Hungary should expedite its formation by a general levy of contributions. The project of the Diet to incorporate with the coronation oath the concessions to be obtained from Her Majesty met with no favour. Maria Theresa declared that she would take the oath in the form in which it had been administered to her predecessors.

After renewed expressions of loyalty the delegates withdrew, but the Queen was soon given to understand that members of the Diet would prefer her assent to their own protocol. The nobles claimed their ancient privilege of exemption from taxation. The more patriotic members desired self-government for Hungary in so far as the internal affairs of the country were concerned, and equality with Austria in matters affecting the dual monarchy. Hungarians were to be nominated to vacant benefices and offices of State. Within twelve months of the death of a Palatine his successor was to be appointed.

Round these points discussion raged at the assemblies of the Diet. On one subject only were the members in agreement with the Queen. They also desired the immediate election of a new Palatine. To Maria Theresa's relief the choice fell on "Father Palffy." Though suffering from gout and hardly able to stand upright, he was assisted into the Queen's audience-chamber. In a few broken sentences he expressed his gratitude to her and to the representatives of the Diet for the honour conferred on him. "Brief, indeed," he said, "must be the span during which Providence might see fit to spare him. He could only aver that he would be ready as heretofore to devote his life and blood for King and Fatherland." The words made a deep impression on those present; so also did the sight of the young monarch with tears in her eyes, as the infirm old Viceroy kissed her hand. His former post of Judex Curiæ was bestowed on Count Joseph Esterhazy, a scion of the famous Hungarian family to which the Primate also belonged.

With Palffy as mediator between the Crown and the Diet, Maria Theresa hoped for the manifestation of a more conciliatory spirit amongst the representatives of the kingdom. To bring about some measure of agreement with her wishes, without alienating his fellow-countrymen, whose aspirations he shared, was no easy task. The Queen was reluctant to create inconvenient precedents by granting even the demands which seemed most reasonable. She strongly objected to a pledge that the office of Palatine should not be suffered to fall into abeyance. A majority of the members of the Diet still demurred when there was any attempt to reach a decision with regard to the co-regency. The Queen therefore declined to take a step which would have put it out of her power to restore Francis to the position of Governor, if higher rank should not be conferred on him during Palffy's lifetime. A compromise was the only possible result of the conflict of purposes. Late in the evening preceding her coronation, Maria Theresa signed her own proposals with some changes and modifications. But she was also constrained to sign another document whereby the Diet reserved the right to further consideration of the debated points. Maria Theresa had successfully evaded their association with her coronation oath. But she was forced to renounce her cherished desire of a prominent position for her husband in the morrow's pageant. Francis was with some difficulty restrained from returning to Vienna. In the end he consented to play the uncongenial part of mere spectator during the earlier part of the day. At the banquet which followed the ceremonial proceedings, he could not be debarred from the place of honour beside the Queen. It was a bitter experience for the new monarch to realize that there were limits to her powers of fascination and persuasion, and that the confidence which she fully intended to justify was withheld from her. But trust in the goodwill of the Habsburgs had been so often abused that there was a strong desire for a more palpable safeguard of national interests.

Having obtained certain guarantees for the future, the Hungarians showed themselves equally determined that nothing should be wanting to the magnificence of the great function of June 25th. An opportune fillip to the Queen's popularity was given by the Elector of Bavaria's protest against her coronation. The indignant Magyars reminded Charles Albert that their Government did not cease to be an elective monarchy until their acceptance of the Pragmatic Sanction. If that instrument had been set aside it would, they asserted, have become an elective monarchy again, with Maria Theresa as the chosen King.

The Elector's attempt to shake the loyalty of the Hungarians was but a prelude to more active hostility on his part. To begin with, however, it intensified the enthusiasm with which Maria Theresa was greeted when she set out for the ancient Gothic cathedral of St. Martin. There could be no mistake as to its being the coronation church. The pyramid surmounting its tower terminated in a gilded representation of the crown of St. Stephen.

Throughout the night would-be spectators had been making their way to Pressburg from Vienna and from all the surrounding region. At earliest dawn citizens and strangers might have been seen hurrying to every point of vantage. Never had the streets been so densely crowded.

The first excitement was caused by the appearance of the state carriages in which the Palatine, the officiating ecclesiastics, and other personages of note drove to the cathedral to receive the Queen on her arrival. Moving in the opposite direction came a procession of noblemen, members of the Diet, and other dignitaries. They were on their way to the Castle to form the guard of honour in the royal procession. Hungarian magnates might haggle about contributing to the taxation of the country; but there was no stinting of expense in the adornment of their persons, or in the caparisoning of their horses. They had made up their minds not to be outshone by the numerously represented Austrian nobility; no, not even by the Knights of the Golden Fleece.

The crowds, who had feasted their eyes on these picturesquely costumed cavaliers, gazed with unabated interest at the solitary occupant of the royal chariot. Pale at her first setting out, before she reached the cathedral the colour had come back to Maria Theresa's face, while the brightness of her eyes struck every beholder. Nothing could exceed the sumptuousness of her robe of cloth of gold, blazing with jewels, though its weight and warmth on a summer's day must have been a serious infliction to one who always shrank from heat. With her fair complexion and " her long, loose, yellow locks, like golden wire," she resembled some heroic figure of German legend.

Within the cathedral the ceremony proceeded in accordance with age-long ritual. At the close of the Primate of Hungary's exhortation to the Sovereign to earn renown as the upholder of justice and good government, she knelt, and with her hand upon the Gospels swore to maintain " the old laws, rights, and liberties of the land." Anointed with oil, and clad in the mantle of St. Stephen, she received the sword of the canonized King of Hungary, and, drawing it from the scabbard made therewith the sign of the cross. With the crown on her head, and the orb and sceptre in her hands, she took her seat on the throne, and received the homage of the Primate and other dignitaries, lay and clerical. At an intimation from the Palatine that the religious ceremony was complete, the multitude congregated outside the cathedral shouted with all their might, "Long live our Lady the King."

Over and over again the salutation was repeated, as Maria Theresa, wearing the crown and other insignia of royalty, drove to the Franciscan church. Here, with the sword of St. Stephen, she created her first batch of knights. Another short drive brought her to a raised platform draped in the Hungarian colours. Standing on this, in the open air, and in the presence of the people, she repeated after the Primate the vow to maintain good government, already sworn to in the cathedral.

One more picturesque ceremony had still to be observed. A slight elevation by the bank of the Danube bore the high-sounding name of the Royal Hill. At its foot a gaily decked black horse awaited the Queen. Mounted thereon, she galloped to the summit; and once more drawing her sword turned its point north and south, east and west. Thus she signified her readiness to turn the sword against the country's enemies, from whatever quarter they might come.

It was at this stage that the British Ambassador obtained his best view of the day's proceedings. "The Queen," he says, "was all charm. She rode gallantly up the Royal Mount, and defied the four corners of the world with the drawn sabre, in a manner to show that she had no occasion for that weapon to conquer all who saw her. The antiquated crown received graces from her head, and the old tattered robe of St. Stephen became her as well as her own rich habit, if diamonds, pearls, and all sorts of precious stones can be called clothes."[1]

Amidst vociferous rejoicings the royal procession took its uphill road back to the Castle. The happiness of the crowned Queen was marred by the absence of her consort from the position of eminence in which she had always pictured him in her anticipation of the day's pageantry. By unfrequented back streets he had betaken himself to windows and other places, whence he could behold the picturesque ceremonial of a Hungarian coronation. At the ensuing banquet husband and wife were once more side by side. The latter, flushed and weary, was finding the heavy diadem an intolerable burden. Her father would have endured any amount of discomfort rather than infringe the custom of wearing it during the festal meal. Maria Theresa judged that it was sufficient to retain it until she had taken her seat as president. Then the crown of St. Stephen was promptly transferred from her aching head to the table in front of her.

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[1] Robinson Papers.

A new day had dawned ere the sound of merry-making died away in the crowded city beneath the shadow of the Castle. Maria Theresa went to rest with the comforting assurance that it had become far more difficult for the Elector of Bavaria and other pretenders to justify their claim to her inheritance. In addition to the so-called "hat of Austria," she had formally received the second of the three crowns which appear in many of her portraits. The third, the crown of Bohemia, was not to be obtained save at the cost of a mighty struggle.

CHAPTER IX

THE INVASION OF AUSTRIA BY FRANCE AND BAVARIA—MARIA THERESA'S APPEAL TO THE HUNGARIAN DIET

THE coronation over, the British envoy returned to Vienna. There, within a day or two, he received information of the impending alliance between France and Prussia.[1] Instantly he was on the way back to Pressburg. The disquieting news was first of all communicated to Sinzendorf and Starhemberg. "They both fell back in their chairs like dead men." Hitherto they had refused to credit the prediction that France would eventually be found amongst the enemies of Maria Theresa. With that very contingency staring them in the face they comprehended how grave was the position of the newly crowned Queen.

The Grand Duke of Tuscany had gone to Vienna. It was arranged that Robinson should have an interview with him as soon as he returned. In the evening the Ambassador betook himself to the Castle. Already it was evident to him that the Court of Maria Theresa would become a genuine centre of social life. She was, he says, "gradually quitting the melancholy etiquette" of the past. Her youth, vivacity, and common sense revolted from the dreary seclusion in which the later Habsburg emperors had spent their days. Neither metaphorically nor literally could their successor endure to be "cabined, cribbed, confined." In all weathers her windows stood open day and night, to the no small perplexity of her contemporaries. There was a widespread belief that, in spite of her healthy appearance, the Queen was "consumed by a raging internal fever." If not fever, some other morbid condition must surely underlie her eccentric craving for fresh air.

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[1] *See* page 95.

A simpler explanation of Maria Theresa's indifference to cold may be found in the rapid circulation of the blood effected by a normal heart of unusual strength. But whatever its origin, there is a peculiar fitness in her association with open windows. In her passage through the house of life, how often do we seem to see her pausing before this or that casement which convention, tradition, or timidity had closed and barred, and patiently devising the means of setting it ajar.

Thus instead of disappearing into an inner sanctum at the close of the day, she aimed at making the evening a time of relaxation for the whole Court, when music, cards, and other diversions might afford some respite from the responsibilities of State, or the routine of officialdom. Apart from her own personal predilection, the mere fact that her consort was happier in this less formal atmosphere would have commended it to Maria Theresa.

She was playing cards when word came that Robinson had been admitted to an audience with the Grand Duke. "It was near nine of the clock on June 29th," as Sir Thomas notes in his report to Lord Harrington. "I had hardly begun to acquaint His Highness in a few words that all was near lost, Prussia had signed with France, and I had taken your Lordship's letter out of my pocket to make a full confidence, when the Queen entered. She had left her play—had heard I waited for the Duke—had been told the treaty was signed—and that I had received a commission."

"The Grand Duke, with a sigh, said: 'Well, what is this treaty?' By their permission I took a candle in my hand and read your Lordship's letter from one end to the other. The Duke could hardly believe the treaty had been signed so long ago as on the 5th past. He observed the bad heart of the King of Prussia, who could hold so different a language by himself and afterwards by his ministers to Lord Hyndford. That now nothing was to be done but to perish—perish sword in hand, and with their friends, or save themselves even without their friends. . . . The Queen let fall a few, though tender, reproaches even in my presence as to the Duke's having often expressed too much hope of the King of Prussia. . . . I said the King of England conjured her Majesty to do all that was humanly possible in Silesia to detach the King of Prussia from this fatal confederacy, since France had most probably promised nothing less than all Silesia to the King of Prussia for his share singly, at least by this alliance he would most certainly appropriate the whole to himself. She answered that in conscience, as well as for all manner of political reasons, she would not consent to part with much in Silesia. She might perhaps part with Glogau, if she could be left in peace on all sides. That no sooner an enemy was to be satisfied than another started up, and then another and another must too be contented, and all at her expense. I assured her Majesty of King George's intention to raise, immediately upon the gaining of the King of Prussia, such a formidable alliance as might disappoint the views of all others." The Ambassador referred to his commission to return with the Queen's reply to the camp of Frederick of Prussia. "The Queen said she pitied me. My commission would be fruitless in Silesia. I told her it was in her power to make it otherwise: that her own fate, that of the Duke, that of her whole family, that of Europe depended singly on her yielding more or less to the hard necessity of the times. She answered what would she not give, excepting in Silesia. 'Let him take all we have in Gueldreland. But if he is not to be had in that manner, others may. Let the Princes of the Empire, let King George II speak only to the Elector of Bavaria. He may be flexible—there may be means to have him.'"

"Your Lordship may easily imagine that this long discourse consisted chiefly in sudden starts and momentary thoughts, as in scenes of the greatest distress. Though the Queen saw that the making up with his Prussian Majesty and giving that satisfaction to the King and the English nation was the best party she could take, yet she could not gain upon herself to take it at any great expense in Silesia. 'Oh, the King your Master!' she said. 'Let him march, let him only march!' Here I presumed to acquaint her that the King my Master could not but look upon her reluctancy to oblige his Majesty as an ill return for the immense sums and forces raised for her service, all of which would be of more or less use to her, as she should take her present resolution. The answer of both the Queen and the Duke was conveyed to me in their casting down their eyes, and then in raising them only to throw them upon each other. His Highness entered at certain times into the conversation, when, by a hint, or a proper observation, it might serve to open, as it were, the Queen's genius, which does not seem yet capable of an universal reflection. Beating about Silesia, attached to that single object that pinches the most, she betrayed rather the narrow way of thinking of those whom she mostly hearkens to, than those talents which I flatter myself will, with time, shoot out to more advantage."

That Robinson's mission to the King of Prussia was perfectly futile goes without saying. "Beggarly offers" was Frederick's comment on the unhappy Queen's proposals. "With what face shall I meet my ancestors if I abandoned the rights they have transmitted to me? With what reputation can I live if I quitted lightly an enterprise, the first action of my reign, begun with reflection and carried on with firmness? Have I occasion for peace? Let those who want it give me what I want, or let them fight me again and be beaten again. Have they not given whole kingdoms to Spain, and cannot they spare me a few trifling principalities? Lower Silesia with Breslau is my answer. I will never give any other."

It was not an agreeable answer with which to return to Hungary. In the brief interval since Robinson's departure, the Elector of Bavaria had poured his troops into Upper Austria and, after taking the frontier town of Passau, had issued a manifesto reasserting his claim to the whole Austrian inheritance.

Writing from Pressburg, Robinson comments on the general consternation that prevailed there and in Vienna—"consternation augmented by the news I brought. I had an interview with the Grand Duke, the Queen being present. She declared herself for an immediate negotiation with Bavaria. I showed the rashness and incertitude of it to the fullest extent. A conference was held after my arrival. The Queen I have learned was almost single in her opinion."

With pressure brought to bear upon her on all sides—pressure from her own ministers, pressure from the envoys of friendly Powers—Maria Theresa did indeed send for a map of the debated province, and drew a line considerably within the boundary of what was generally regarded as Lower Silesia. With this final, reluctantly granted concession, the British representative betook himself once more to the Prussian camp. Ascertaining through his minister, Podewils, the nature of this ultimatum, the highly incensed Frederick refused to see Robinson. Nay, more, Sir Thomas was informed that if he did not return to Austria in all haste, his Prussian Majesty would ascribe unfriendly motives to the King of England, in thus compelling his nephew to treat with a person whom the latter so much disliked. A thankless task was that of the mediator, whose ungracious dismissal by Frederick was followed by a threat of mob violence on his reappearance in Vienna. Vain, too, was his endeavour to keep Augustus of Poland faithful to the cause of Maria Theresa. "The Court of Saxony," says he, "complains of my partiality for the King of Prussia; the King of Prussia of my partiality for the Queen of Hungary, and the Court of Vienna very often of my partiality against its interests and politics. I am the unfortunate victim of all three, if not approved by the King, my royal master."

To Hyndford Frederick showed himself both courteous and appreciative, but, so far as the reconciliation of Austria and Prussia was concerned, the efforts of King George's special envoy proved as abortive as those of Sir Thomas Robinson. The proposed treaty between France and Prussia was duly ratified. The French Government guaranteed Breslau and Lower Silesia to Frederick. He in return renounced his claim to Jülich and Berg in favour of the Elector Palatine, and definitely promised his vote and support to the Elector of Bavaria.

Sheer persistency had realized the first part of Belleisle's dream. Ready to his hand was the peculiar combination of forces wherewith he proposed to humiliate Austria, as a stepping-stone to the uncontested predominance of France. In that country mobilization proceeded apace, and two armies were presently encamped on the French frontier.

One, to be commanded by Belleisle himself, was destined for service on the Danube. The other, under Marshal Maillebois, was to cross the Rhine into Westphalia, and keep the "Pragmatic Army" of George II safely mewed up in Hanover. Such measures could hardly be construed as the acts of a friendly Power, yet it was given out that the French were merely sending to the Elector the quota of auxiliaries to which they were pledged by treaty.

The said Elector was utterly devoid of Frederick of Prussia's capacity for pushing his own fortunes. Pending the arrival of the French contingent, he made no attempt to follow up the seizure of Passau on July 31st, 1741. A month passed before the conjunction of the two armies could be effected. Not till September 14th did they reach the town of Linz, little over a hundred miles from Vienna. Linz made no resistance, for the partisans of Bavaria were numerous in Upper Austria, and nobles and burghers flocked to take the oaths of allegiance to Charles Albert, and to acknowledge him as their ruler. Had the French and Bavarians pushed on towards Vienna with any vigour, it is difficult to see how they could have failed to take the city. Its fortifications were out of repair, its garrison was weak, and there was no quarter from which any help could be obtained, for the only armies of Austria were that of Neipperg, far away in Silesia, and the force with which Marshal Traun was preparing to defend Lombardy against the threatened Spanish attack. But the facility with which the Elector had obtained possession of Upper Austria, with its capital of Linz, induced him to believe that at any time he could have Lower Austria and Vienna on the same easy terms. The primary object of his ambition was Bohemia, and he was nervously apprehensive lest Prussia or Saxony should forestall him by annexing that kingdom. True, Augustus, like Frederick, was pledged to support the Bavarian claim—the bribe in his case being Upper Silesia and Moravia. Yet so low was the prevailing standard of political morality that a prince was apt to dread his reputed friends more than his openly avowed enemies.[1]

While the Elector tarried at Passau, he received frequent reports of strained relations between Maria Theresa and the Hungarian Diet. In the circumstances it was natural that Charles Albert should interpret in his own favour the dissension between his opponent and her subjects. Scarcely had the last echo of popular rejoicing died away ere the stormy scenes in the Diet were being re-enacted. The first bone of contention was the so-called "coronation gift" to the Sovereign. The magnates proposed a grant of a hundred thousand florins. Considering the deplorable state of the country, twelve thousand ducats would be ample, said the leaders of the First Chamber, and stuck to their point, until both parties bethought them that, in view of the depleted treasury, the money must needs be borrowed in any case, and that they might as well borrow the larger sum. In this half-hearted fashion the Queen obtained her gift.

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[1] *A History of Germany, 1715–1815.*

The adjourned discussion of the Hungarian protocol afforded exceptional opportunities for wrangling. More and more insistent became the demand for home rule. It was declared essential that Maria Theresa should restrict herself to the services of native-born Hungarians for the settlement of all matters pertaining to the internal government of the kingdom, and of all questions affecting Hungary that came before the Central Government. Not content with a general motion, there followed a long list of provisions for the exclusion of foreigners from every conceivable office in Church and State, and from having any part in the distribution of the Hungarian revenues. All the rankling hatred of Austria, begotten by centuries of injustice and spoliation at the hands of German bureaucrats, found expression in the measures to which the royal assent was now required.

Of their general drift the Queen had been fully informed. Distrust of Austria involved distrust of herself, and this she bitterly resented. Yet, in "those nice and critical times," she could not oppose a direct negative to the Hungarian demands. Nor, though she felt the need of counsel, could she turn to any of her Conference Ministers. Too often, since coming to Pressburg, had she heard complaints of the way in which her predecessors had taken the opinion of Germans on the affairs of Hungary. She had resolved that a similar charge should not be brought against herself.

Yet neither the Primate, whom she consulted in the first instance, nor Palffy, who shrank from giving her pain, could help her to unravel the political entanglement. Fortunately the recently appointed Judex Curiæ, who ranked third in the State, proved a very competent adviser. With strong nationalist sympathies Esterhazy combined a sincere desire for the success of the new reign.

When Maria Theresa first summoned him to her presence, she made no attempt to conceal that she was deeply wounded by the suspicion that she might prove unfaithful to her coronation vow. She admitted that her German ministers were not too friendly to Hungary. But why should not the Magyars deal directly with herself, and learn that she had their interests very much at heart? The emotion with which she besought Esterhazy to mediate between her and his fellow-countrymen probably moved him less than the young Queen's evident desire to take a fair-minded view of the Hungarian position. She had not sent for him, she said, merely to listen to an opinion, his judgment would weigh with her in forming her answer to the Diet.

Esterhazy was able to assure her that the continued want of confidence exhibited by the Diet had no real significance in so far as she herself was concerned; it was but the logical outcome of the unwisdom of her forefathers in suffering prejudiced Austrians to dictate to Hungary, and to misrepresent the nation to its kings. Like Palffy, Esterhazy was ready to foster the growing conviction that past mistakes would now be retrieved. The difficulty was that they could only point to a reign of a few months.

In less downcast mood, Maria Theresa turned to the consideration of the protocol. The Judex Curiæ was requested to explain the full scope of its provisions, and to return for further consultation on the ensuing days.

The contrast between the Queen's earnestness of purpose and the supercilious manner in which former Habsburgs had approached Hungarian questions, was very striking; so much so, indeed, that the more sanguine supporters of royalty foretold a speedy and satisfactory settlement of the questions at issue. Headed by Palffy, they made a fresh attempt to gain the consent of the Diet to the co-regency, only, however, to be met with the same objections as heretofore. If Prussia was to be repelled on the north-west frontier, why take a step that would irritate Poland on the north-east? As in Austria, so also in Hungary, Augustus would regard the advancement of Francis of Lorraine as a menace to the claim of his own wife, should Maria Theresa and her children predecease the Grand Duke.

More than a fortnight passed away ere the Queen's answer came before the Diet. Much had been conceded; but, again, so much had been changed or rejected, that a disingenuous ruler might still find loopholes for escape from responsibility.

The disappointment of the deputies found vent in the wildest uproar. Many asserted their intention of quitting Pressburg immediately rather than consent to the mutilated proposals. The very phraseology of the reply was an offence. It was too reminiscent of the communications of the late King not to give rise to the suspicion that it did not emanate from the Queen herself, but from the detested Austrian Ministers.

Fortunately only a few of the deputies fulfilled their threat of departure. When the tempest showed some signs of moderating, the Queen's supporters prevailed upon the Diet to consider the reply from the throne with a view to revision. The amended measure went some way towards satisfying the more aggressive nationalists and sticklers for privilege, without undue insistence on what might be construed as encroachment on the royal prerogative.

In no shape or form could the Hungarian proposals be otherwise than distasteful to the Austrian Ministers and aristocracy, and Maria Theresa was strongly advised to withhold her assent. Submission to restrictions not hitherto imposed on Hungarian monarchs was intensely repugnant to her. Fortunately, however, she was much too clear-headed not to perceive that the limit of compromise had been reached. Not without risk had the deliberations been prolonged throughout the months of July and August (1741). With half Europe preparing to contest the Austrian succession, and the Elector of Bavaria eager to curry favour with the Magyars, they stood to win in any case. Yet one who in the art of governing was but "an unlessoned girl," had clung so pertinaciously to the time-honoured rights of the

Hungarian Crown that she emerged from the struggle with better terms than could have been conceived of at so fateful a crisis. Robinson notes that the Queen was beginning "to shine out for her sense and talents," and that "her Ministers had presumed too much at first upon her inexperience and her sex to turn her as they pleased." At the present juncture the timid or self-interested protests of Austrian counsellors were quietly set aside, and the charter which had assumed so many forms was, in its final presentment, ratified by the Queen.

A tussle in which neither side had been worsted left the combatants with a feeling of mutual respect that boded well for the future. Still following her own judgment, Maria Theresa determined to give the Hungarians an unmistakable proof of her confidence in their goodwill. Without their whole-hearted co-operation it was plain that she could not raise a force sufficient to repel the Franco-Bavarian army which was threatening Vienna. Orders had indeed been issued for the recall of ten regiments from Traun's army in Italy. But for effective grappling with the situation nothing short of a third army was required.

For generations it had been a fixed principle of Austrian policy, rather to submit to defeat by the Turks or other enemies than authorize any general arming of the Hungarians. So great was the dread lest when the war was ended, or even while it was still in progress, the weapons should be turned against the Emperor-King. The same timidity had led to one of the grievances complained of by the Diet, the placing of Hungarian regiments under officers of a different race.

It is easy, therefore, to comprehend the dismay that fell upon the hitherto all-powerful Germans when it became known that the Queen contemplated nothing less than summoning to her standard every Magyar who was capable of bearing arms. Like the princess in the *Arabian Nights*, who sought treasures on the summit of a mountain, she was assailed by a chorus of deterrent voices. Rashness was too mild a word to apply to such a scheme: it was very midsummer madness. The proceedings of the Diet had shown the Magyars to be as perverse and rebellious as at any former period. And so on in the same strain.

To the Austrians, who implored her to abandon the thought of a Hungarian army, Maria Theresa probably repeated her answer to the Magyars who besought her not to insist on a co-regency in Hungary, "I have a strong will, and when I have sworn to myself to do a thing I will accomplish it." At all events, she found the means of stopping her ears and holding on her way.

On September 7th, she summoned representatives of both Chambers to confer with her at the Castle. With the fluency which never deserted her at a critical moment she dealt with the dangerous aspects of the political situation, chiefly deploring the ill-fortune of her subjects in being exposed to the uncertainties of war. She reminded the Hungarians that the safety of their country was largely dependent on that of the other lands of the House of Austria. She therefore proposed to exercise her right as the feudal superior of the magnates and prelates to incorporate with her own army numbers of fully equipped hussars, regularly maintained by the Magyar nobles. This demand was agreed to with more enthusiasm than Maria Theresa had ventured to expect. The magnates proclaimed their willingness to devote themselves, their sons and their revenues to the service of the Queen. The immediate raising of an army of forty thousand men was decided without a dissentient voice. The Sovereign was assured that if Pressburg were to come within the sphere of war, she had but to betake herself to Raab with her son, to be perfectly secure under Hungarian protection.

Without declining the proposal, Maria Theresa determined not to forsake her capitals until there should be actual risk in remaining near the Austro-Hungarian frontier. In the course of the summer she had spent many days in Vienna. Lest its citizens should complain of desertion by the Royal Family the heir to the throne had been left at the Hofburg, under the care of his grandmother. In view of a possible investment of the city, Empress Elizabeth was preparing to retire to Gratz. Meanwhile, however, the danger was not imminent. Only when it became so was the baby Archduke to be brought to Pressburg.

Encouraged by the support of the great nobles of Hungary, the Queen resolved to make a bid for help from the nation as a whole. Even with the already decreed addition to her military resources, she could not hope to equal, far less outnumber, the hosts of her enemies. The royal prerogative could secure no further increase of troops. There was only one chance of ensuring the safety of her inheritance, but it was doubtful if she could persuade the Hungarian Diet to ordain in her favour an *Insurrectio generalis*, or summons to take up arms throughout the country. The *Insurrectio* had hitherto been associated with some crisis in the history of the Magyar kingdom. It would be a new departure to invoke for the preservation of the House of Austria, a power which the later Habsburgs had regarded as too dangerous to be recognized. In view of the strong anti-German attitude of the legislators there was also reason to fear that if a resolution for a general levy of troops came before the Diet there would be a majority against it.

In the confidence begotten of honesty of purpose, consistency of policy and dislike of half-measures, Maria Theresa was able to brush aside the malcontents who made a last effort to stay her course. All the dogged resolution, the combativeness, the capacity for leadership which had come down to her with her Habsburg blood urged her forward. Her husband, who knew the Hungarians, was sympathetic; influential members of the National Assembly were with her heart and soul. On September 11th numerous representatives of both Chambers of the Diet were invited to gather at the Castle. On the preceding evening Palffy had entertained them in princely fashion, and done his utmost to prepare the way for a loyal response to whatsoever the Queen might propose. He was specially careful to acquaint his countrymen with the fact that she was acting on her own responsibility and contrary to the views of her German advisers.

Even the deputies, who were most averse from the idea of making sacrifices save for the actual defence of Hungary, were moved at sight of Maria Theresa as she passed between the ranks of legislators in the Audience Chamber, and took her seat on the throne. Her expression told of mingled sorrow and anxiety. The black gown of the mourner shrouded the tall figure, hitherto so resplendent in her robes of State. There was nothing to divert attention from the one symbol of royalty assumed for the occasion. On her shining hair there rested once more the crown of St. Stephen. By the Magyars it was regarded with almost superstitious veneration. "It was the symbol of the jurisdictional power of the State. 'It is not the holy crown which crowns; it is the will of the people,' declared the parliament of 1440." Significant beyond words was its appearance at this national crisis. So jealously was it guarded, and so great was the dread of its removal from the country, that only the most absolute unanimity between Maria Theresa and her Hungarian counsellors could have enabled her to take this effective means of reminding her subjects that she and they were solemnly pledged to mutual support.

In conformity with the usual custom, the royal proposals were prefaced by a statement from the Hungarian Chancellor. Count Ludwig Batthyany described in detail the unjustifiable attacks of foreign princes on the Queen's hereditary dominions and the straits to which she had thereby been reduced. He urged the Magyars to seek lasting fame by driving back the enemy and preventing the fall of Vienna, if only as a means of ensuring the safety of their own country.

When the eloquent Hungarian oration came to an end Maria Theresa took up the tale of her wrongs in equally comprehensible Latin. The emotion which could not be kept out of her voice made her appeal all the more telling. "The disastrous situation of our affairs," she said, "has moved us to lay before our dear and faithful states of Hungary the recent invasion of Austria, the danger now impending over this kingdom, and a proposal for the consideration of a remedy. The very existence of the Kingdom of Hungary, of our own person, of our children, and our crown are now at stake. Forsaken by all, we place our sole resource in the fidelity, arms, and long-tried valour of the Hungarians; exhorting you, the states and orders, to deliberate without delay in this extreme danger on the most effectual measures for the security of our person, of our children, and of our crown, and to carry them into immediate execution. In regard to ourself, the faithful states and orders of Hungary shall experience our hearty co-operation in all things which may promote the pristine happiness of this ancient kingdom and the honour of the people."[1]

The youth and beauty of the Queen, the halting voice in which she referred to her children, her refusal to be fettered by ancient prejudice, the indisputable proof of her trust in Hungarian integrity made an overmastering impression on every one present. The aged Primate, as spokesman of the various states and orders, had scarcely begun to assure the Sovereign of the support of the entire nation, when the hall re-echoed to the sound of hundreds of sabres half-drawn from the scabbard and then thrown back to the hilt, and of hundreds of voices repeating the words first used by Palffy on his appointment as Palatine, "We consecrate our life and our blood to your most sacred Majesty."

Deeply moved by this manifestation of zeal and loyalty, Maria Theresa, "who had hitherto preserved a calm and dignified deportment, burst into tears of joy and gratitude." The members of the Diet repaired to their Chambers and used their restored "right of insurrection" to vote a liberal supply of men and money to wage war for the Queen who had so completely won their allegiance.

From the Germans in her environment came plenty of adverse criticism of the day's proceedings. One of their number nearly gave rise to disturbance in the Audience Chamber. He was overheard to remark that Maria Theresa might as well have entrusted herself and her family to the devil as to the truculent Magyars. Yet in spite of gloomy prognostications neither the Queen nor the Hungarians had any cause to rue the day on which they exchanged their pledge of mutual trust and helpfulness.

Even the briefest narrative of the reign of Maria Theresa makes mention of this impressive and picturesque incident. Her solid contributions to the work of political and social reform pale before the appeal to the Hungarian Diet. This lack of proportion may be more apparent than real. Had the later record of the reign been unworthy, its heroic inauguration would hardly have sufficed for the building of an everlasting name.

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[1] This faithful rendering of Maria Theresa's speech is taken from William Coxe's *History of the House of Austria*, Vol. III.

The enthusiasm evoked by the events of September 11th, 1741, was not confined to Hungary. It spread to every part of the dual monarchy. The Allies of Austria, the hero-worshippers throughout Europe joined in extolling the Queen and devising schemes for her defence. Legend was soon busy with the scene at Pressburg. Voltaire, in his *Siècle de Louis Quinze*, originated a version of the occurrence still widely accepted as fact. The Queen, with the enemy on her track, is represented as fleeing from Vienna to Pressburg, and appearing at a session of the Diet with her infant son in her arms. Her appeal to the deputies is followed by the immediate response, "Moriamur pro rege nostro Maria Theresia." Regardless of the indisputable evidence of the daily register of the proceedings of the Diet,[1] and the equally authoritative record of the ceremonial events at Court[2] from day to day; in defiance of the narratives of eye-witnesses and contemporary letter-writers, including the Queen herself, the garbled story continues to circulate. And this although the reality has no need of embellishment. Fact testifies more strongly than fiction to the hazardous nature of the path which the Queen elected to tread, and to the fearlessness with which she pursued it to the end.

The introduction of Archduke Joseph into the scene may be traced to the confusion of two separate incidents. After the substantial concessions granted by Maria Theresa and the demonstration of her unreserved confidence, the Diet decided that it would be churlish to offer further opposition to the co-regency. With a significant reminder that his nominees to vacant offices must be Hungarians, the coveted position was offered to the Grand Duke.

On September 21st a meeting of the Diet was once more convened in the Queen's Audience Chamber, and again she took her seat on the throne. It was but ten days since the events which had made so deep an impression on the assembled company. In comparison therewith the installation of Francis was a tame enough affair. To Maria Theresa, however, it was a matter of surpassing importance, and she was keenly sensitive to the general lack of enthusiasm. The formalities were scarcely at an end when she sent for her infant son. On the previous day there had been considerable excitement over the arrival of a boat from Vienna with the Archduke and his suite on board. And now "at the sight of him the deputies made great acclamation."[1] "He was just like a little squirrel," said one, who observed the restless movements of his diminutive Highness and the bright, observant eyes which he had inherited from his mother. His appearance gave a pleasant turn to an otherwise strained situation. And the installation ended in general satisfaction and the bestowal of gifts and titles on those who had been mainly instrumental in bringing about the gratification of the Queen's wishes with regard to the status of her consort in Hungary.

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[1] *Diarium Dietale.*

[2] *Hof-Zeremoniell Protokoll.*

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[1] Robinson.

CHAPTER X

MARIA THERESA AND COUNT SILVA-TAROUCA

TO Maria Theresa her success in kindling the enthusiasm which was spreading to every part of Hungary was but a step towards the vindication of her contested rights. She would not suffer herself to fancy that it had been taken in vain, though not till after many days could her new army be available for service. But at every remembrance of Vienna, still in imminent peril, she longed passionately to discover new ways of resisting the invaders. There were moments when she was wellnigh overwhelmed with the sense of her own insufficiency. Even the ordering of her days left much to be desired. Do what she would, her manifold duties persisted in treading on each other's heels. In her singularly level-headed estimate of her own character she foresaw that, in happier times, her affection for husband and children and her delight in various forms of amusement might lead her to forget that "she did not belong to herself but to the State." She therefore hit on the original idea of having always at hand a friendly critic whose chief end in life it should be to keep her up to the mark.

A young constitutional ruler might have looked to her Prime Minister for fatherly guidance, as Queen Victoria looked to Lord Melbourne. But even if Maria Theresa's Ministers had been mental and moral prodigies it would have been neither natural nor expedient for the heiress of the absolute Habsburgs to confer with any one of them, save on matters affecting his own department. It was with her a fixed principle and a wise one, to keep strictly to religious topics with her confessor. Her husband's eight years' seniority ought to have made him more of a helpmate than was actually the case. Maria Theresa regarded him as too closely identified with herself to be fitted for the office of Mentor. The real impediment lay in the fact that for all his good points he was not her equal either intellectually or morally.

Her choice for the difficult and delicate post of adviser to the Queen's political conscience fell upon one whom she had known from childhood. A year or so before her birth a young Portuguese nobleman, Count Emanuel da Silva, made his way from Lisbon to Vienna, and received a commission in the army with which Eugene was carrying on war with the Turks. Thus, at the age of twenty, Count Emanuel took part in the great battles of Peterwardein and Belgrade. The victorious Commander-in-Chief noted with approval the courage and the modesty of the young officer. Lest he should suffer by confusion with the bearer of a similar patronymic Eugene advised him to make his name more distinctive by adding that of one of the parental estates. This was done, and it is by the assumed portion of his name that Count Silva-Tarouca is generally known.

When in the intervals of military service he appeared at the Austrian Court, it was in the nature of things that Charles VI should regard with peculiar interest the son of a man who, as general in the Portuguese Army, had fought on the Habsburg side in the Spanish Succession War.

A few months before the birth of Maria Theresa, a brother of the King of Portugal came on a visit to Vienna. The army had gone into winter quarters, so Count Silva-Tarouca was able to be in attendance on the prince. They became acquainted with Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, who appears to have found them equally charming. To the Abbé Conti she writes: "One of the most accomplished men I have seen in Vienna is the young Count Tarouca, who accompanies the amiable prince of Portugal. I am almost in love with them both, and wonder to see such elegant manners and such free and generous sentiments in two young men that have hitherto seen nothing but their own country." The reporter is obviously jumping to conclusions with regard to Tarouca, who was in the second year of his absence from Portugal. And she is untrustworthy to the last degree when she enlarges on the way in which "he succeeds with the devout beauties here." For a stranger surrounded by scandal-mongers it must have been uncommonly difficult to arrive at a right judgment of the characters who figured in Viennese society. So Lady Mary assumed that a genuine interest in religion was incompatible with the zest with which Don Emanuel was entering into the pleasures of the Imperial city, and that his reputed austerity of morals must be a subtle means of exciting the interest of silly women, and making it easy to lead them captive.

It is, however, no superficial pietism, but a deeply rooted and reverent Christianity that stands revealed in the published fragments of Tarouca's correspondence. Linked therewith is a refinement of thought and feeling inconceivable apart from refinement of life. Bred for a soldier he could make no pretence to scholarship, yet he was not devoid of literary culture. An interest in books would, as a matter of course, be fostered by his association with Prince Eugene, whose library "though not very ample was well chosen." The old warrior seems to have discovered a kindred spirit in the young Portuguese noble whom the chance of war had brought to his notice. He liked his companionship, and on the last night of Eugene's life it was Tarouca who accompanied the frail old man from the house where he had spent the evening to his own residence.

Even the impassive Charles VI felt the attraction of Don Emanuel's compelling personality. The latter, after the death of Eugene, exchanged the army for the civil service, and was attached to the Council for the government of the Austrian Netherlands. At intervals he was employed at Brussels, but more frequently he was to be found in Vienna, where his ability and discretion gained him the respect even of Austrian aristocrats, to whom the Spanish and Portuguese occupants of Government posts were, as a rule, merely undesirable aliens.

From the outer circle of the Court, Count Silva-Tarouca passed to the less formal region dominated by the Empress Elizabeth. Nor did manifestations of friendship stop short with their Imperial Majesties. Tarouca had the power, somewhat rare in the artificial eighteenth century, of winning the hearts of children. With the little princesses he was soon on a footing of comradeship, and his influence over Maria Theresa was one of the most humanizing in her early experience. The trustfulness with which she learned to regard him was wholly unaffected by the flight of time. Her wish that this friend of her girlhood should become the guardian of her maturer life was therefore perfectly natural. At the date of her father's death Tarouca, aged forty-four, was still connected with the Council of the Netherlands. Yet he was no ordinary official. He had been employed by the Emperor in various political missions, and this had given him exceptional insight into the general working of the machinery of government and into the difficulties which beset the new head of the State.

Shortly after her accession Maria Theresa appointed Count Emanuel President of the Council of the Netherlands. She also informed him of the novel position for which, in her own mind, he had been designated. A less alluring prospect for a high-strung, sensitive mortal could hardly be imagined. It meant constant attendance at Court in a nondescript capacity, which was bound to give rise to suspicion of favouritism on the one part, and of cupidity or espionage on the other. Touching and praiseworthy was the young Queen's desire for guidance. Gratifying beyond measure to the Count was the assurance of her belief in his ability and faithfulness. But who could tell if these admirable sentiments were likely to be enduring? Should the self-imposed curb prove irksome to the Sovereign there would probably be an end of Tarouca's much-prized friendship with the Royal household. Nay more, he could not disguise from himself that the withdrawal of the Queen's favour would spell wholesale disaster so far as his career in Austria was concerned. And he had a newly married wife and possible children to consider.

In view of his manifest reluctance to entertain the proposal Maria Theresa did not press for a decision, but now and again she reverted to the subject. And just about the time of her celebrated appeal to the Hungarian Diet the offer to Silva-Tarouca was renewed in set terms which hardly admitted of a refusal. Even had there been less of authoritative command, the issue would doubtless have been

COUNT EMANUEL SILVA-TAROUCA

the same. At that crucial moment no friend of the Queen could stop to count the cost of any service required by her. In this instance also she carried her point. Tarouca accepted the precarious position.

It would be too much to say that he never regretted it. Often he chafed against the inevitable restrictions. More than once he petitioned to be relieved of his burdensome duties. But Maria Theresa was satisfied with her choice of preceptor, and sagacious enough to perceive the difficulty of replacing him. Over and over again she testifies to the value of being enabled to see herself through the eyes of a disinterested spectator, of being helped to develop the latent powers of her nature. Nor did she resent being found fault with when she deserved it. Thus she is warned against her propensity to intemperate speech. It is possible, says her tutor, for a Queen to convey a strong sense of disapprobation without calling a Minister "a fool," or a general "a coward." Hasty, ill-considered action had also to be guarded against. To this end it was well to have a set hour for the duties of the day. The following time-table is suggested. Supposing Her Majesty should fix eight o'clock as the hour for getting up, it is known that she spends little time over her toilet, therefore the first hour may be chiefly devoted to private prayer, attendance at Mass, and the morning coffee, with the sole stipulation that it should be drunk while it is hot and not neglected till it is out of season and likely to cause indigestion. Thereafter a fond mother will want at least half an hour to assure herself that all is well with the children of the household. From 9.30–11.30 is to be given to public business. Then the private secretary is to receive instructions as to his work for the day, and there will only be time for a brief, necessary rest before dinner at 12.15. On no account is this meal to be hurried over. Pressing business could be attended to afterwards, but as a rule the Queen should withdraw to her own apartments to rest and listen to nothing more serious than the chatter of the little Archduchess. Before 4 o'clock there will be time to see the Empress Elizabeth and other members of the family, and regulate domestic affairs. From 4–6 would be a good time for receiving the Ministers—each having his own appointed hour and day. But Wednesday and Saturday were post-days, and the afternoons should be reserved for letter-writing. Attendance at Vespers, exercise, and amusement would fill up the time between 6 o'clock and supper at 8.30—except on Sundays and fête days, when the Queen would hold a reception. There should be nothing but relaxation after supper.

In after days the time-table was subjected to considerable alteration, but the advantages of method were appreciated from the first. Tarouca relates that in her eagerness for self-improvement the Queen followed his earlier instructions with the docility of a cloistered nun. Later on the perversity of human nature sometimes inclined her to disregard counsels which, though admittedly wholesome, were none the less unpalatable. Thereupon Tarouca, being also human, protests in rather querulous tone. " Just keep on giving me advice," says Maria Theresa on one such occasion. " If I do not seem to heed it at the time, it always comes back to me afterwards."

CHAPTER XI

THE PRICE OF THE DELIVERANCE OF VIENNA—BRITISH ENTHUSIASM FOR MARIA THERESA—THE ELECTOR OF BAVARIA BECOMES KING OF BOHEMIA AND EMPEROR CHARLES VII—THE INVADERS OF THE DANUBE VALLEY REPELLED BY KHEVENHÜLLER

WHEN the baby Archduke was brought away from Vienna, it was believed that the city would presently be compassed about by the hosts of the enemy. "All manner of noble and official people were flying elsewhither to covert. The archives were carried to Gratz. The two empresses, Maria Theresa's mother and aunt, fled different ways. . . . Khevenhüller, the commandant of the garrison, who presided with fine scientific calmness and clearness over the fortifying, was the only force left."[1]

But Ludwig Andreas Khevenhüller was a force to be reckoned with. In youth he acquitted himself creditably under Prince Eugene. In Italy, during the War of the Polish Succession, his reputation was so firmly established that he was declared to be the best cavalry officer in the Emperor's service. Now, at the age of fifty-eight, he enters on the last and most brilliant stage of his career.

His responsible post had been conferred upon him by Charles VI, but he had not held it long enough to be answerable for the dilapidated bulwarks of the city. At the first hint of danger he redoubled his efforts to put the capital in a proper state of defence. So swiftly did he pass from one vulnerable point of the fortifications to another that he seemed to be everywhere at once, directing the labours of soldiers and civilians who toiled at the restoration of walls and earthworks. To Khevenhüller it was no reason for slackness that, with his six thousand, he could not hold out long against the Elector's fifty thousand. Whatever happened, he was determined that at Vienna there should be no rehearsal of the tame submission at Linz; and there was always a chance that fortune might prove inconstant to the other side. So it came about that every day spent by Charles Albert in futile activity found the Imperial city a little better prepared to resist him.

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[1] Carlyle, *Frederick the Great.*

How to assemble a force powerful enough to give battle to the Franco-Bavarian army and raise the expected siege of Vienna was the problem of problems to Maria Theresa in the autumn of 1741. Reluctantly, almost despairingly, she was driven to admit that, albeit the Hungarians were flocking to her standard, the third army could not take the field in time to avert the fall of the Austrian capital. Neither was there any further hope of succour by means of the Pragmatic army. With France mounting guard over the south-west of Hanover, and Prussia over the south-east, George II could make no advance either towards Silesia or the Danube without exposing his electorate to attack. On September 27th he felt himself constrained to sign a treaty of neutrality. This pledged him not to assist Maria Theresa for a year, or to vote for her husband at the Frankfort election.

For a moment it seemed as if Belleisle's scheme were going to succeed in its entirety. All the Electors were actively or passively ranged against the House of Austria. Russia, whence Maria Theresa expected help, had been dexterously inveigled by France into war with Sweden. Spain was becoming more aggressive in Italy. The death of the Queen of Sardinia, who was also a sister of Francis of Lorraine, severed the strongest line of attachment between the Courts of Vienna and Turin, just when it was desirable that it should hold firmly. The crafty widower was evidently veering to the side of the Bourbons. Frederick of Prussia had nearly succeeded in cutting off Neipperg's army from its base.

In bygone days many a monarch had acted on the assumption that might was right; but, lest his design of overreaching a weaker neighbour should end in his being haled before the international judgment-seat, the aggressor was generally careful to shroud his intentions in a cloak of plausible verbiage. It remained for the eighteenth century and the War of the Austrian Succession to exhibit a whole company of despots, who make no effort worth mentioning to conceal their policy of cynical opportunism. To this spectacle of monarchy divested of all its nobler attributes has been traced the rise of the movement which culminated in the French Revolution.[1]

The query as to how far Maria Theresa was herself affected by the corrupt political standard of her age may be safely relegated to the end of her reign. In its initial stages she forms a most notable contrast to the adepts in chicanery and shilly-shallying who held sway in other European countries. Nor can it be argued that necessity left her no option as to her course, that in like circumstances a similar attitude would have been assumed by any normally constituted ruler eager to retain possession of ancestral dominions. Such contentions only hold good up to the moment when she is brought face to face with apparently insuperable difficulties. At this point her opponents, taking for granted that they had an average mortal to deal with, fully expected that she would abandon what they regarded as antiquated ideas about national honour and international rights. With callous unconcern they anticipated the last struggles of their victim, picturing her unavailing efforts to drive satisfactory bargains with her tormentors, and her eventual yielding to their numerical superiority, with much bemoaning of the hardness of her fate.

That there were times when the Queen's high spirit was daunted by the bleakness of the prospect before her goes without saying. Writing to her mother-in-law, she expresses doubt if there will be left to her a single town wherein she may find peace and safety in the spring of 1742, when her next confinement was expected. With Maria Theresa, however, the downcast mood was of short duration. It has no place in the story of the anxious weeks and months in which she systematically played the man.

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[1] *See* Albert Sorel, *L'Europe et la Révolution Française.*

To a British pamphleteer it seemed indeed that she possessed a monopoly of virile qualities. Feigning to borrow the lantern of Diogenes and to renew the famous search, "the most noted people at present in the world" are passed in review. The claims of contemporary kings and statesmen to manhood are dismissed with scorn, but the object of the quest is at last discovered in the female King of Hungary.[1]

Not till we come to the days of Garibaldi and the Liberation of Italy have we anything approximating the enthusiasm of the English people for the cause of Maria Theresa during the earlier stages of the War of the Austrian Succession. George II's agreement to the treaty of neutrality was denounced in scathing terms. "The newspapers are full of it," writes Horace Walpole, "the press teems." A balladist hit off the situation by depicting His Britannic Majesty as a fraudulent sea-captain. The proprietors of his vessel, compassionating his *Hungry* sister, had made him a generous allowance for her relief, but—

"His sister, whom he to his owners had sworn
To see duly settled before his return,
He gulls with bad messages sent to and fro,
Whilst he underhand claps up a peace with her foe."

In popular parlance Hanover is referred to as *Terra Damnosa*. The allied monarchs are "purple homicides." The Queen of Hungary, "a princess who has hitherto worn a crown of thorns," is extolled on all hands. The Queen of Spain, "a fury let loose for a curse to all Europe," is not to be named in the same breath as Maria Theresa.

Hatred of the one Queen was as natural as kindly feeling for the other. England was still at war with the country which was virtually governed by the "termagant" consort of Philip V. Whereas the Habsburg Sovereign was expected to follow in the track of her predecessors so far as it led to friendship with the Sea Powers, and opposition to the House of Bourbon.

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[1] Dennis Coetlogan, *Diogenes' Rambles.*

There was therefore no lack of British sympathy when Maria Theresa turned from France to Bavaria, and from Bavaria to Saxony, only to find that the offers which she felt justified in making would not suffice to buy off a single adversary. Driven to the last extremity she was constrained to admit that Neipperg's army was the one force which could save Vienna. And, albeit with the utmost loathing, she consented to the only means of setting it free—an acceptance of Frederick's terms. It is easy to blame her for rejecting the counsel of those who had advocated this step when it would have gained her an alliance instead of the mere neutrality which was offered now, but the agreement would scarcely have amounted to more than a neutrality, no matter by what name it was called. Maria Theresa and Frederick were far from the end of their quarrel, though neither was unwilling to gloze it over for a season. The services of Hyndford were therefore requisitioned to more purpose than on the former occasion. The result was the secret Convention of Klein-Schnellendorf, October 9th, 1741, whereby, with every intention of recovering her loss when she had shaken herself free of her other enemies, Maria Theresa agreed to Frederick's demand for Lower Silesia and Breslau.

The Austrian commander broke up his camp on October 16th and marched off through the mountains to Moravia. At the end of three weeks he reached its eastern frontier, *en route* for Prague, which was threatened by an army of twenty thousand Saxons. The Elector of Bavaria was nearly in sight of Vienna when he heard of the new development. "Instead of striking at the great seat of his enemy's power, when he had it almost in his grasp," he changed his plans and marched his army into Bohemia to secure the possession of Prague. It was an incredibly short-sighted proceeding, for the capture of Prague would have been involved in the fall of the Habsburg capital. Now, whatever happened in Bohemia, Maria Theresa had at least procured the brief interval which was all that was needed for the concentration of her army of Hungarians.

Had Neipperg been gifted with any skill in seizing the skirts of happy chance, he might at this juncture have wrought confusion amongst the enemies of the Queen.

Yet although everything depended on reaching Prague while the Allies were still widely separated, he displayed the same fatal leisureliness which had ruined the Austrian cause in Silesia. Nor was there any prospect of better things when the Grand Duke Francis joined the army as Commander-in-Chief. The Austrians had merely two dilatory leaders instead of one. In place of engaging in a neck-and-neck race for Prague, Francis called a halt of four days, and, as a matter of course, was outdistanced by the Franco-Bavarian army, which had abundance of time to join forces with the Saxons under the walls of the menaced capital. The city surrendered to the first assault of the brilliant Count Maurice de Saxe.

The Austrian army fell back to a position about fifty miles south of Prague. The Elector of Bavaria was crowned King of Bohemia on December 19th, and, after appointing a council for the administration of the country, took his departure for Frankfort, where the Electoral Diet had assembled.

France was now able to compass her first object. The Imperial Crown was wrested from the House of Austria, and on February 12th the new King was crowned Emperor by the title of Charles VII.

Though Belleisle had pulled all the wires which brought about this result, it was popularly attributed to the underhand dealings of Fleury, still the nominal dictator of the policy of France. A contemporary cartoon exemplifies British commiseration of the woes of Maria Theresa, and British contempt for their supposed author. It is sometimes labelled "The Cardinal's Masterpiece, or Europe in a *Flurry*," and sometimes "The Raree Show from Prague."[1] In a large hall, kings, electors, and other political characters are grouped about a table, on which is displayed a map of Central Europe. Cardinal Fleury, the custodian of the map, is evidently assigning territories to the rulers of Bavaria, Saxony, and Prussia, who follow the movements of his pointer. A doorway on one side of the hall gives entrance to Maria Theresa, carrying her son and accompanied by

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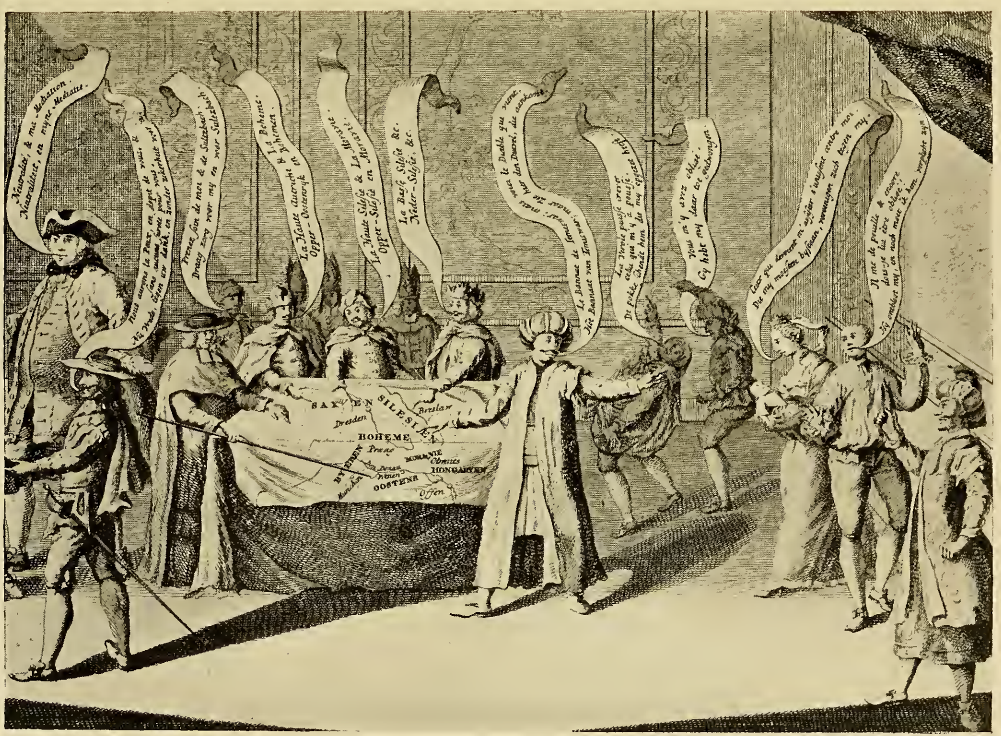
[1] The illustration is from a Dutch reproduction of the popular cartoon Part of the original is omitted. *Political and Personal Satires*, Vol. XIII, No. 2503.


Neutralité, & ma Mediation. Neutraliteit, en myne Mediatie.
Prenez soin de moi & de Sultzbach. Draag zorg voor my en voor Sultzbach.
La Haute Autriche & La Boheme. Opper-Oostenryk en Bohemen.
La Haute Silesie & La Moravie. Opper-Silesie en Moravie.
La Basse Silesie &c. Neder-Silesie, &c.
Vous m'y avez obligé. Gy hebt my daar toe gedwongen.
Ceux qui devroient m'aider s'unissent contre moi. Die my moesten bystaan, vereenigen zich tegen my.
SAXEN
SILESIE
Breslau
Dresden
BOHEME
Prague
MORAVIE
Olmütz
HONGARYEN
Wenen
OOSTENR
Offen

THE CARDINAL'S MASTERPIECE, OR THE RAREE SHOW FROM PRAGUE

her husband. Francis is crownless, wigless, and clad merely in his undergarments. A key to the crowded scene is supplied by a set of verses in broken English, which are put into the mouth of an unseen showman. The refrain is manifestly suggested by the cock as a symbol of France.

"Who see my Raree Show from Prague?
It represent de grand Intrigue
Christened by some de Holy League.
Doodle, doodle, do.

Who he dat at de table stand
Like Moses with his powerful wand
Dividing up de promised land?
Doodle, doodle, do.

O dat be he, de famous he,
Who order tings as dey shall be
On land, and some tink too at sea.
Doodle, doodle, do.

Who those that do de map inspect?
O dey be three ob de Elect,
Dey take whatever he direct.
Doodle, doodle, do. . . .

Who be de Lady wid de child?
Dat be de Hongar's Queen quite wild
To find herself so basely guiled
Doodle, doodle, do.

'Lo Babe, your parent by my side
Quite stripped of all—Ye Gods,' she cryed,
'In kings and princes who'd confide?'
Doodle, doodle, do."

By bitter experience Maria Theresa had come to know the precariousness of putting trust in princes. Her reliance on military commanders had so far been equally disappointing. Her fortunes had reached their lowest ebb ere she realized that in Khevenhüller she had a general who possessed in no small degree the promptitude, resolution, and energy that were lacking in Neipperg and in her husband.

When the Franco-Bavarian army fell back from Vienna the Queen promptly decided to return to the Hofburg. On December 11th the citizens of the Austrian capital celebrated their deliverance from threatened danger, and the return of their Sovereign. Her arrival had been preceded by that of her sister and children.

Ten days later the Viennese were once more blocking the streets and crowding to the windows and doorways, in order to watch the departure of Khevenhüller and his army of sixteen thousand men. The recovery of Upper Austria was his primary object. But the ill-advised strategy of Charles Albert had exposed Bavaria itself, as well as the province which had just acknowledged the Bavarian overlordship. A double blow could therefore be aimed at this particular enemy. So while Khevenhüller advanced rapidly up the Danube Valley, his able coadjutor, General Bernklau, with ten thousand additional troops, was making his way through the Tyrol in order to turn the tables on the new Emperor by threatening Munich.

"The move was an instant success. Upper Austria was recovered, Bavaria overrun and laid waste by Bernklau's moss troopers. The French contingent left behind on the Danube, was driven in on Linz and cooped up there. Unable to escape, it was forced to capitulate on January 24th, 1742. It was a remarkable coincidence that on that very day on which not only Linz but Passau fell into Austrian hands, Charles Albert was being elected Emperor at Frankfort. Similarly, on the day of his coronation, February 12th, Munich capitulated to escape being plundered by the enemy. With the exception of Ingolstadt and one or two other strong places, all Bavaria was in Austrian hands."[1]

Meanwhile Maria Theresa had contrived to dissociate both her husband and Neipperg from the control of the army in Bohemia. The new commander was her brother-in-law, Prince Charles of Lorraine. Neipperg was reappointed to his former governorship at Luxemburg. The Queen would have preferred to keep Francis at her side. In his absence she was consumed with anxiety as to his personal safety. And when her sharp eyes perceived that he was no heaven-born commander, she dreaded lest one whose reputation was so dear to her should compromise himself by any glaring mistake.

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[1] *A History of Germany, 1715–1815*, pp. 127–8.

At the same time she could not but admit the justification of the Grand Duke's plea that, without loss of prestige, he could not withdraw from active service while the monarchy was still in danger. He foresaw a certain distinction for those who were on the winning side at the impending capture of Linz. The Queen therefore consented to the separation which would enable her spouse to shine in the reflected glory of Khevenhüller.

No words can describe her relief and gratitude and exultation when every messenger brought her news of the success of the army which she had literally called into existence. To its commander she sent, by her consort, a portrait of herself and her son, together with the following letter:

"Dear and Faithful Khevenhüller,

"Here you behold the Queen, who knows what it is to be forsaken by the whole world. And here also is the heir to her throne. What do you think will become of this child?

"To you, as a true and tried servant of the State, your most gracious Lady offers this picture of herself and, therewith, her whole power and resources—everything in fact that her kingdom contains or can effect. You, the hero and faithful vassal, shall dispose of all things as you think fit, and according as you would render account before God and the world in general. May your achievements be as renowned as those of your master, the great Eugene, who rests in God. Be fully assured that, now and always, you and your family will never lack the grace and favour and thanks of myself and my descendants. A world-wide fame will also be yours.

"Fare well and fight well,

"Maria Theresa"

When the series of Austrian triumphs was reported in England, London was almost as jubilant as Vienna. "The great success of the Queen of Hungary's arms" was one cause for satisfaction, "The number of blows and thwarts which the French had received" was another. But Frederick of Prussia was not well pleased. He had agreed to the Convention of Klein-Schnellendorf for the very purpose of thwarting France and keeping her from becoming the arbiter of events in Europe. Nevertheless, he could not survey the brightening prospects of Austria with any equanimity. If Maria Theresa contrived to shake off her other assailants she would assuredly seek to deprive him of Silesia ere the province had been secured to him by a general treaty. So far as he was concerned the neutrality had already fulfilled its object. France was less formidable, and his men were thoroughly rested. Frederick therefore reverted to his former alliance with France, Bavaria, and Saxony for the partition of the Austrian dominions.

Before the end of December the Prussians had crossed the frontier of Moravia and seized the important town of Olmutz. A more skilful move could scarcely have been devised. It threatened the position of both Austrian armies, the one in Bohemia and the other in Bavaria. It again exposed Vienna to extreme risk. If the leaders of the French and Saxon armies, then at Prague, had seen their way to vigorous co-operation with Frederick, Maria Theresa's chief capital, and possibly the Queen herself, might have been captured by the Allies. Fortunately for her the French and Saxons refused to budge, so the task of dislodging Frederick became relatively simple. Ten thousand men were withdrawn from the army in Bavaria and stationed between the enemy and the capital. Companies of Hungarian horsemen appeared on the frontiers of Moravia and threatened Frederick's communications with Silesia. He had also to face the certainty of attack by Charles of Lorraine at the head of the main Austrian army. Lest he should be hemmed in by his opponents, the Prussian King decided to abandon his advantageous position and to lead his army into Bohemia.

Enraged at the conduct of his Allies, Frederick turned to Maria Theresa and volunteered to resume his attitude of neutrality if she would cede to him, not only Upper and Lower Silesia, but the County of Glatz, together with certain territories in Bohemia. The Queen indignantly refused to consider the extortionate proposal. But Frederick's victory over Charles of Lorraine at Chotusitz, on the Upper Elbe, paved the way to more satisfactory negotiations. Like Mollwitz, " the battle of Chotusitz was a Prussian victory but hardly an Austrian defeat." It sufficed to make both Frederick and Maria Theresa genuinely desirous of peace. The former was alarmed because he could no longer prevent the active intervention of England on behalf of the Queen of Hungary. Walpole, the great advocate of peace, had fallen from power. Lord Carteret, the new Foreign Minister of George II, had determined on a bold scheme of policy. The projected revival of the Grand Alliance for the humiliation of France was no longer to be delayed. To begin with there was to be an end of the half-hearted support of Austria. The King of Prussia's claim to Silesia could not be disallowed, for his adhesion to the scheme was ardently desired; but to all other would-be despoilers of Maria Theresa's inheritance the cry must be "Hands off." So long as she was engaged in a struggle for her rights, it was obvious that she could do little to further the ends of the Grand Alliance.

Frederick's elation over his success at Chotusitz did not blind him to the fact that Maria Theresa had also gained a point, and that she might secure several more in the near future. Thus it came about that the first overtures for peace were made by the victor in the recent battle. That he was sincere was evident from the lowering of his demands. He still made a point of retaining Glatz, which he had occupied during the campaign, but there was no further reference to lands in Bohemia. His minister Podewils was soon in conference with Lord Hyndford, who had been empowered to negotiate on behalf of the Queen of Hungary. On June 11th they signed the Preliminaries of Breslau, which were afterwards ratified by both sovereigns. Maria Theresa ceded to the King of Prussia the County of Glatz as well as Upper and Lower Silesia, with the exception of the principalities of Troppau and Teschen. In return for such substantial concessions the Austrians naturally hoped for an offensive and defensive alliance; but Frederick would only promise the immediate recall of the Prussian troops from Austrian territory and give a pledge of neutrality. These Preliminaries were formed into a definitive treaty, which was signed at Berlin on July 28th, 1742. With the Treaty of Berlin the first Silesian War comes to a close.

CHAPTER XII

THE TABLES TURNED ON THE FRENCH, BAVARIANS, AND SPANIARDS—MARIA THERESA'S CORONATION AS QUEEN OF BOHEMIA—THE MARRIAGE OF HER SISTER TO PRINCE CHARLES OF LORRAINE

THE political history of Europe in the eighteenth century finds humorous illustration in the caricatures of contemporary English artists. Thus the diplomatic and military events of the year 1742 are ably summarized in a cartoon known as *The Tables Turned.* It represents a dining-hall with a round table in the middle. The cloth is spread, the covers are laid. A two-headed Habsburg eagle is served up on the central dish. One of its wings is amissing. It has been transferred to the plate of Frederick of Prussia, the only member of the company who has contrived to secure a seat at the table and a helping from the dish. Other potentates would fain do likewise; but the approach to the table is guarded by Maria Theresa, who lays about her with a horsewhip. The immediate object of castigation is the King of France. Though he was never so entirely in her power as is indicated by the cartoonist, there is no doubt about the blows which she was instrumental in inflicting upon him.

Within two months of Frederick's withdrawal from the strife, British influence had induced Augustus of Poland and Saxony to accede to the Treaty of Berlin. Thus Maria Theresa was left free to concentrate her attack on France and Bavaria. Belleisle, who had resumed command of the French troops in Bohemia, found himself in a perilous position. Absolutely isolated and exposed to the onslaught of superior forces all he could do was to bolster up the

Emperor's cause at Prague. Maria Theresa had pleasing visions of securing him and his entire army as prisoners. "Their unconditional surrender would be some compensation for the injury France had done her. They would also be a valuable diplomatic asset." The Grand Duke Francis, still in search of military laurels, undertook the investment of Prague.

But rather than suffer Belleisle and his garrison to fall into the hands of the enemy, the French Government determined to send to their aid the force with which Maillebois had been overawing Hanover. This movement forced the Grand Duke to raise the siege in order to interpose his army between the Bohemian capital and the advancing corps. Great on both sides were the issues at stake, urgent the need of decisive action, yet neither commander would face the risks of a battle. Beyond the fact that they kept each other in check for the greater part of the winter their record for the campaign of 1742–3 is a blank.

The spiritless conduct of Francis is even more inexplicable than that of his opponent, Khevenhüller having marched his troops into Bohemia for the express purpose of supplementing the Grand Duke. From this combination of forces, which was expected to spell victory for the Queen of Hungary, the sole beneficiary was the Emperor Charles VII. For the weakening of Austrian control on the Danube enabled the Bavarians to drive the invaders out of their country. Charles, who had been an exile in Frankfort ever since his coronation, ventured back to Munich.

Without French support it was unlikely that he would be suffered to remain there. France, however, was becoming more and more concerned for her own safety. Since Maillebois had failed to defeat the Austrians, and was therefore unavailable for further service in Western Germany, the way was left open for an advance of the Pragmatic army. English reinforcements were poured into Holland. Lord Stair, the commander, might conceivably resolve to strike a blow for Maria Theresa in France itself. In the interest of the new storm-centre, the old one was less regarded. Belleisle, despairing of relief, determined to break out of Prague with his shattered regiments.

The blockade abandoned by Francis had been resumed by Lobkowitz, a Bohemian commander. His extremely lax oversight made it possible for Belleisle to lead the effective portion of the French army not only beyond the city wall, but beyond reach of the besiegers in the course of a single night (Dec. 16th–17th, 1742). Yet while the sortie was brilliantly successful, the ensuing retreat is only comparable to Napoleon's return from Moscow. Fourteen thousand men set out from Prague, but it was a sadly diminished host that reached the Bavarian frontier ten days later. More than twelve hundred soldiers had perished during the forced march of a hundred miles through "a country covered with snow, broken by almost impassable mountains, abounding in defiles, and infested by the irregular troops of the enemy. The roads, overspread with corpses, were dreadful to behold."[1] Many of the fugitives succumbed to fever and exhaustion when the terrible journey was over.

The French appear to have found some consolation in comparing the retreat of Belleisle with that of Xenophon and his Ten Thousand. But nothing could blunt the edge of Maria Theresa's disappointment at the failure to intercept the retiring garrison. While it was satisfactory to reflect that Bohemia and its capital were once again under Austrian rule, the thought of how much more might have been accomplished made the Queen chafe against circumstances which kept her away from the head-quarters of the army. Looking back on the course of the war she always maintained that, if it had not been for the frequent additions to her nursery, she would have taken command herself.

The complete failure of Belleisle's great scheme is ingeniously indicated in the cartoon of *The Tables Turned.* On the wall of the apartment opposite the French king the *Mene Tekel* inscription is appearing. The treaty for the partition of Austria has fallen from his pocket and a dog is going to make off with it. There is a forcible reminder that Maria Theresa had to defend her inheritance in Southern as well as in Central Europe. While taking vengeance on France with the whip in her right hand, the

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[1] Coxe, *House of Austria*, Vol. III, p. 287.

Queen strikes backward with her left, hitting Don Carlos, King of Naples, and his brother, Don Philip.

In Italy the key of the situation was held by Charles Emanuel of Sardinia. His kingdom has been aptly described as "the Prussia of Italy." He was as eager as Frederick to extend his boundaries and as heedless of the means he employed, so long as he gained his ends. "While determined to reap all the advantage he could from Maria Theresa's embarrassment, he viewed with great hostility Elizabeth Farnese's schemes for her second son. Lombardy, which she proposed to conquer for Don Philip, was the last place in which the Sardinians could with equanimity see Bourbons established. The instinct for holding the balance between rivals drove Charles Emanuel to the side of Austria as being the weaker, and though he negotiated simultaneously with both parties, it was with Austria that he came to terms in February, 1742."[1] As a result of this agreement Traun, the Austrian general, took command of a Sardinian army destined to act conjointly with his own troops. His object was to check the advance of a newly landed Spanish army with reinforcements from Naples. As it happened the Neapolitan regiments were presently recalled. A British fleet had severed communication by sea between Spain and Italy, and the admiral in command had been threatening to bombard Naples. Don Carlos was thus left with no option save to withdraw from the coalition against Austria.

The Tables Turned shows him gazing ruefully at the Queen of Hungary and calling to his brother, "She's broke my nose, Phil." Philip, dodging to avoid a blow, replies, "Let's run, Don Carlos." The frenzied Queen of Spain exclaims, "She'll kill my poor children," nor is she likely to be consoled by her husband's remark, "The road to crowns is dangerous, madam."

It was destined to become more dangerous still. Traun's decisive victory over the Spaniards at Camposanto (February 8th, 1743) was a severe blow to Don Philip. His mother was not, however, at the end of her resources. When his cause had been strengthened by marriage with a daughter of Louis XV, Don Philip renewed his attempt to appropriate an Italian crown.

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[1] *A History of Germany, 1715–1815*, p. 142.

An earlier event of the same year was the death of Cardinal Fleury. Recent occurrences had brought him back to his original conviction that peace was the most pressing need of France. So far as that country was concerned the initial advantages of war had proved singularly evanescent. The French candidate had already been ousted from the Bohemian throne. His position as ruler of Bavaria was in jeopardy. To France he owed his title of Emperor, but he could exert no influence on her behalf, and had to be maintained at her charges.

It was shortly after the Cardinal's decease that, as already mentioned, the Bavarians contrived to shake off the Austrian yoke. It was speedily reimposed. At Simbach, on their eastern frontier, they were hopelessly defeated by the army under Charles of Lorraine (May 7th). Three weeks after his arrival in Munich the luckless Emperor was again in exile.

Thus Maria Theresa's longing for a victory at the outset of the new campaign was fully satisfied. The news of triumph found her in Prague. The herald dispatched by Prince Charles reached the ancient city on the Moldau in the early hours of May 12th. No bearer of good tidings ever arrived at a more opportune moment. Things were not working too smoothly at Prague. Maria Theresa had bitterly resented the defection of Bohemia. She admitted that the people in general could scarcely do otherwise than submit to whatsoever power was in the ascendant. Her quarrel was with the bulk of the Bohemian nobility. Here was a kingdom pledged to support the Pragmatic Sanction, yet the leaders of the nation, men who owed their lands and titles to Habsburg generosity, had not scrupled to enthrone another monarch in her stead. Gratitude and fidelity were such marked features of her own character that when weaker natures disregarded their claims she was apt to discount the strength of the temptation. Bohemia had been weighed in the balances and found wanting. There was nothing more to be said. The inhabitants would find their privileges curtailed. The Jews, whom she loathed and suspected of being peculiarly disloyal, were to be bundled out of the country neck and crop. As for the faithless nobles, they should be made to feel the weight of Habsburg displeasure.

Her favour was therefore exclusively reserved for Bohemians who had never wavered in their allegiance to the House of Habsburg. Especially gracious did she show herself to men of rank and influence who had held aloof from her rival and his Court. They now took the lead in all things, and did their utmost to assure an enthusiastic reception for the legitimate Sovereign. Their efforts were creditably seconded by the people as a whole. The citizens of Prague, among whom were many Jews, were specially anxious to appease the irate monarch. They made lavish display of decorations. They could not, however, conceal the deplorable aspect of streets in which every building was more or less of a ruin. Years must elapse ere there could be any revival of the stately magnificence of the city wherein, as girl and boy, the Queen and her consort had first been brought together.

Though Francis had no part in the impending installation of his wife as Queen of Bohemia, he was to have a more honourable position as spectator than at Pressburg. Yet the ceremony failed to arouse in Maria Theresa a fraction of the interest appertaining to her former coronation. If the Hungarians had proved less plastic than she could have wished, they had at least made her the direct successor to her father's crown.

By contrast there was now to be placed on her head a crown which she looked upon as contaminated by its association with the puppet of France. It had become, she declared, "uncommonly like a fool's cap," a remark which did not endear her to Bohemians who had not forgotten the conciliatory Charles of Bavaria. In the antipathetic atmosphere at Prague, plots for the restoration of the evicted monarch were likely enough to be hatched. Hence the timeliness of the victory at Simbach which made it unthinkable that the Emperor would ever regain his lost ground.

As if by magic a new spirit manifested itself in the relations of governor and governed. Uncertainty and mutual distrust began to make way for a sense of community of interest. The Queen had hitherto insisted on an inconveniently early hour for the coronation. Her sole idea was to get it over as soon as possible. She now announced that the ceremony would be preceded by the public thanksgiving for victory. With the music of the *Te Deum* still sounding in her ears, and all that it implied foremost in her mind, Maria Theresa found in her second coronation an unexpected fulness of meaning. And she noted with satisfaction the enthusiasm of her reception by the crowds that filled the streets and surrounded the palace.

The festivities of May 12th were continued on May 13th—Her Majesty's twenty-sixth birthday. Prince Charles sent as a gift the standards taken from the enemy. During the remaining weeks of her residence at Prague, and in the course of her journey back to Vienna, she was cheered by reports of various successes gained by her troops over the French and Bavarians. For this run of good luck her brother-in-law received rather more than his share of praise. Deference to the counsels of Khevenhüller, the chief of the staff, contributed in no small degree to the fortunate issue of operations against the enemy on the Bavarian frontier. Charles VII was constrained to withdraw the residue of his soldiers to neutral ground, and leave his electorate in the custody of Austria till the close of the war.

Meanwhile, the Pragmatic army had been marching up the valley of the Main in order to join forces with the Austrians. Under the command of George II it scored a victory over the French at Dettingen. But His Majesty was so nearly taken prisoner that his successors on the British throne have never been suffered to expose themselves to similar risks. The Battle of Dettingen was fought on June 27th, 1743, the very day on which the Emperor assented to the humiliating Convention with Austria.

Maria Theresa, victorious on every side, had a unique opportunity of making peace on advantageous terms. The Emperor offered to renounce all claim to her inheritance and to abandon the French alliance provided he were left in undisputed possession of Bavaria and the Imperial title. But the Queen would hear of no peace which did not award her compensation for the loss of Silesia, "the fairest jewel of her crown." And where was compensation to be had if not in Bavaria? She declined to relinquish her grasp of the electorate. As a matter of principle it was, she said, incumbent on her to go on with the war until she had an equivalent for every inch of alienated territory. As for the Emperor, let France extricate him from the bog into which she had lured him, and endow him with a new principality.

Thus Maria Theresa turned her back on the proffered olive branch, and prepared to throw herself whole-heartedly into the anti-Bourbon crusade of England and Holland. She would have preferred a more independent course, but her treasury was still empty, and a continuation of English subsidies had to be purchased by her assent to the Treaty of Worms which leagued Austria with the Maritime Powers, Saxony and Sardinia (Sept., 1743). A secret article pledged Austria and Sardinia to drive the Bourbons out of Italy.

On the resumption of hostilities Prince Charles was to carry the war into the enemy's country and seek to recover Alsace and Lorraine. But before setting out on a new adventure it was decreed that the young warrior should receive due reward for services already rendered. On January 7th, 1744, the church of the Augustines was once more crowded with the witnesses of an impressive ceremony. A gushing spectator records that "the Queen and her sister in their robes of state had the appearances of goddesses in the likeness of women." The occasion was the marriage of the younger divinity to Charles of Lorraine.

Brief but very pleasing are the allusions of contemporaries to the second daughter of Charles VI. A year younger than Maria Theresa, she was brought up under the selfsame influences. The sisters naturally had much in common besides their love for one another. They were, however, essentially different in character. In her gentleness and adaptability Marianne was more like her mother than the combative Habsburgs. In appearance she also resembled the Brunswick side of the Imperial family, but she lacked Maria Theresa's imposing stature. Her robust health from infancy onwards goes far to account for the placidity of temper which provoked comparison with the fieriness of the elder princess. "She is all meekness and mildness," says Robinson, of the youthful Marianne. "She will make a good sister." The forecast was amply verified.

In circumstances that might have excited jealousy in a less noble nature, the young Archduchess was content to take her stand in the political background. Thus the bond of sisterly affection was kept unbroken. On the friendship of her earliest companion Maria Theresa was indeed more dependent than ever after her accession. A certain amount of circumspection had to be observed in her intercourse with her mother. In her sister she could confide without reserve.

Charles VI's final intentions with regard to his younger daughter were in harmony with her own wishes. But to the Empress Elizabeth the landless condition of Prince Charles seemed an insuperable barrier to his marriage with a Habsburg archduchess. Matters assumed a different footing when the Queen of Hungary secured a revenue for her brother-in-law by appointing him Governor of the Austrian Netherlands. Military success was another asset in his favour, so also was Maria Theresa's promise to make her sister co-Regent of the Netherlands, thus ensuring her position in the event of widowhood.

At the date of his marriage Charles of Lorraine was a man of thirty-three. He had outstripped his brother in height, but resembled him in feature—though with obvious traces of smallpox. His popularity was not confined to Austria. In the *Gentleman's Magazine* for June, 1742, we read that "Prince Charles is extremely commended for courage and conduct, and makes up a little for other flaws in the family"—a somewhat mordant reference to the ineffectual generalship of Francis. Had it not been for his too early and easy advancement to the highest rank in the army, Charles might have attained not only occasional success, but enduring fame. He was not without qualifications for a military career, but he suffered from the drawback of being set to command before he had learned to serve. Though he was popular with his subordinates he had no power of imposing his will upon them, and nothing would induce him to give place to another leader. When the Battle of Dettingen cleared the way for a combination of the Pragmatic and Austrian armies, it was Prince Charles' jealous refusal to yield any priority to George II that prevented the victory from being effectively followed up.

MARIA THERESA

FROM THE PRINT ON SALE IN LONDON DURING THE WAR OF THE AUSTRIAN SUCCESSION

For six weeks after their wedding Prince and Princess Charles remained in Vienna. The happy marriage and the successful campaign were celebrated by a whole series of festive events. There was the Carrousel, a sort of pageant in which the Queen and her sister took part. It afforded opportunity for the display of skilled horsemanship, and was held in the great riding-school adjoining the Palace. There were *Wirthschaften,* or masked balls, when Francis and Maria Theresa played the part of an innkeeper and his wife, and entertained their guests with less formality than would otherwise have been permissible. There were musical performances, both public and private. Her Majesty's invited guests were mainly Court functionaries and representatives of the ministerial and diplomatic circles. But at this time she began to hold receptions on two or three evenings in the week when men and women of acknowledged social position, whether her own subjects or foreigners, could be presented to her. "The old Hofburg seemed to take on a new lease of life," and Maria Theresa had never been more radiantly happy. When the burden of State did not press too heavily, it was evident that she could extract the fullest measure of enjoyment from the passing moment. Count Silva-Tarouca had paroxysms of anxiety lest his hitherto docile pupil should waste overmuch time in frivolous amusement. He sent her a solemn reminder of the duties and responsibilities of monarchy. It was returned to him with the delightful marginal comment, "Tell me all this again at the beginning of Lent."

There was indeed no cause to fear that the joyous mood would be unduly prolonged. The parting between Maria Theresa and her much-loved companion was at hand. To Marianne it must have seemed as if she were going into exile. Her husband could do little more than see her established in Brussels before he rejoined the army. The members of the new household had been carefully selected by the Queen with the view of securing for her sister the largest measure of happiness and freedom from responsibility. As political adviser to the inexperienced Governess of the Netherlands, Maria Theresa nominated Count Wenzel Kaunitz, and she adhered to her decision in spite of protests from the ambitious Count himself and from her own advisers, who deplored the sacrifice she made in depriving her cause of an able representative at Turin.

Kaunitz, together with Silva-Tarouca, Khevenhüller and other eminent servants of the State, had recently been invested with the Order of the Golden Fleece. For Khevenhüller, who had been the first to stem the tide of alien invasion, Maria Theresa had a peculiar regard. He was taking a leading part in formulating the plan of the next campaign, when the news of his sudden, serious illness threw a gloom over the city which his victories had preserved from the attack of the enemy. No one was more distressed than the Queen. She hastened to visit her devoted general and bring him the consolation of her sympathy and gratitude. Simple and natural as such a step appears at the present day, it was one which none of her immediate predecessors would have dreamed of taking, and illustrates the more rational relationship between sovereign and subject inaugurated by Maria Theresa in the Habsburg monarchy. To Khevenhüller she had given a last token of royal favour. He died on January 26th, 1744.

Thus, on the eve of a fresh campaign, Maria Theresa found herself faced with the difficult problem of appointing a new chief of the staff for the Austrian army. A war could not last three years without some revelation of superior military talent. But unless allied to noble birth outstanding merit was of little avail. Despite their sullied records the names of Wallis and Lobkowitz were submitted to the Queen. She wisely set them aside and recalled Traun from Italy. To him she confided the office which had been so honourably held by Khevenhüller, of commander of the forces in Austria. In the impending campaign he was to be nominally under Prince Charles. Actually Traun had the more responsible position.

CHAPTER XIII

THE SUCCESS OF MARIA THERESA'S ARMY IN THE CAMPAIGN OF 1744—THE DEATH OF PRINCESS CHARLES OF LORRAINE

BETWEEN the first and second parts of the drama, entitled by Carlyle "The Sorcerer's Sabbath of a European War," there is an interval of about eight months. When in May, 1744, the curtain rose on a new scene of strife, the grouping of the combatants had to some extent been anticipated. On the one side was Maria Theresa and the other signatories of the Treaty of Worms; on the other Louis XV and Philip V of Spain, united by a new family compact. France, having thrown off all pretence of neutrality, proceeded to attack Austria in the Netherlands and to hamper Austria's chief ally by efforts to bring about the restoration of the Stuarts to the British throne. Meanwhile, almost unobserved, the main body of the Austrian army had been marching westward under Charles of Lorraine and Traun. Suddenly the French conquest of the Low Countries was arrested by disconcerting news. The Austrians had crossed the Rhine and were occupying Alsace.

There was an immediate division of the forces commanded by Louis XV in person. The majority turned southward to intercept the invaders. They were delayed by a dangerous illness of the King, but put to no serious loss. Before they came in touch with the Austrians the latter had abandoned their advantageous position and were recrossing the Rhine.

"The credit for having ruined the best chance the eighteenth century was to see of reuniting Alsace to the Empire, is due to Frederick II."[1] He was alarmed at the first indication that the spoils of the campaign might fall to Maria Theresa. With Alsace and perchance Lorraine in her grasp, it would be difficult to prevent her proposed annexation of Bavaria, and inconvenient increase of power in Germany. Casting about for the means of putting a spoke in her wheel, Frederick perceived the dejected figure of the Emperor hovering about the stage. When interrogated, Charles VII professed himself willing to guarantee not only the past but the future conquests of Prussia, provided he were helped to recover his electorate, and left in undisputed possession of the Imperial throne.

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[1] *A History of Germany, 1715–1815*, p. 148.

Thereupon a bargain was struck, and an unexpected turn given to the development of the drama. The Emperor disregarded the Convention with Austria and began to rally his Bavarian troops and French auxiliaries. Frederick, at the head of eighty thousand men, invaded Bohemia and laid siege to Prague. Maria Theresa decided that it was hopeless to pursue other aims till some crushing defeat had been inflicted on her unprincipled neighbour. Hence the mandate which recalled Prince Charles and Traun from the further side of the Rhine. Before the first column of the relieving army could reach Bohemia, Prague, weakly garrisoned as heretofore, had surrendered to the enemy. Then Frederick pushed on in a south-westerly direction, in order to catch the Austrians between his own army and the Franco-Bavarian host which was expected to follow in their rear.

But winter was at hand, and the French, mindful of their former sufferings among the Bavarian mountains, hesitated to cross the frontier. The Bavarians on their part could not resist the opportunity of dislodging the Austrian oppressors of their country. Though unsupported, Frederick still hoped to score a victory over his opponents. But the wily Traun persuaded Prince Charles to avoid a pitched battle and engage in the series of manœuvres which severed Frederick's connection with his base at Prague. For a time he secured supplies by foraging. But Maria Theresa betook herself to Pressburg and, in response to her second appeal to the Hungarians, troops of their light horsemen came flocking into Bohemia and fell upon the Prussian foragers and outposts. Frederick, completely frustrated, beat a hasty retreat into Silesia with the enemy in full pursuit. From further disaster he was saved by the timely intervention of General December. The severity of the weather forced Traun to fall back into winter quarters in Bohemia.

To Maria Theresa it was not given to taste the full sweetness of success. With relief and thankfulness she heard of the discomfiture of Frederick. But distressing news from Brussels excluded all thought of rejoicing. In the summer months the city had been an insecure place of residence for a Habsburg princess, but the new Governess of the Netherlands stuck bravely to her post. How lonely it was no one knew better than her elder sister. The arrangements for the departure of Kaunitz were hurried on. With heartfelt pleasure Maria Theresa penned the letter which he was to deliver to Princess Charles in person. "Here is Kaunitz," it begins; "I grudge parting with him, but I am persuaded that he is worthy of your confidence, and that he will do his utmost for you. If you are satisfied, keep him with you. If not, I can always find another post for him."

With Kaunitz at Brussels, the Queen had some assurance that her sister would neither be exposed to danger nor fall into any grave political error. The one remaining cause for uneasiness was the possibility of any mishap at the young Regent's approaching confinement.

Both sisters were good correspondents, and they made the most of the only means of bridging the distance between them. One or two of Maria Theresa's letters have escaped destruction. How human they are, and how incompatible with the conception of the writer as a cold-blooded politician who made little account of family ties! Public events are relegated to the background when the prospective aunt seeks to encourage and counsel the prospective mother. If the tendency to lay down the law even in domestic affairs is characteristic of Maria Theresa, equally so is the vein of tenderness running through her letters and the frequent expressions of passionate devotion.

When the anxiously expected messenger reached Vienna he was the bearer of sorrowful tidings. The infant was stillborn. There was expectation of the mother's recovery when the dispatch was written, but she had been so nearly beyond help as to justify the administration of the last Sacraments.

The Lord Chamberlain describes the general consternation at the Austrian Court when the painful news became known. "The Queen," he says, "does nothing but weep. The Grand Duke can do little to comfort her, he is so grieved himself."

The ensuing weeks brought varying reports. Not till October 20th, the anniversary of the Queen's accession, was there intimation of decided improvement. Next morning Maria Theresa assures her sister that "no 20th of October ever brought so much pleasure and satisfaction as yesterday. The favourable report put us on a very pinnacle of happiness. But what a 19th went before it! How I lived through that day I hardly know. Now let us put aside all sorrowful reflections, and think only of your restoration to health."

For about a fortnight the hope of recovery was continued. Then came a return of alarming symptoms. Maria Theresa, in despair, sent Engel, the Court physician, to Brussels. Meanwhile Kaunitz, with the assurance of Her Majesty's approval, had summoned from Leyden the man who was destined to supersede Engel—Gerard van Swieten, the most famous pupil of the famous Boerhaave.

Had he been in charge of the Archduchess from the first, the course of events might have been different. By the time he reached Brussels her illness had assumed a very complicated form. Van Swieten expressed hope of recovery, and commended the measures that had been employed by the responsible doctors. Ground for hope there must have been, for the patient lived a month longer. But it is not necessarily a good sign when an eminent consultant suggests no radical change of treatment. That he contrived some alleviation of suffering is evident from Maria Theresa's expressions of gratitude. Engel and his *confrères* were furiously jealous, and did their utmost to vilify the man whom they regarded as an interloper. But he had the confidence of the Queen and Kaunitz, and no morbid dread of being in a minority. Maria Theresa had been in correspondence with him before his summons to Brussels. The origin of her appreciation of Van Swieten, and decision to invite him to Vienna, has been a subject of much needless conjecture. It would have been an extraordinary thing if she had *not* known all about him. During the first years of her married life her physician was Bassand, who was a pupil of Boerhaave's, and doubtless a fellow-student of Van Swieten's. The latter must have been known by repute to Kaunitz, who was also a graduate of Leyden. But before beginning his medical course Van Swieten had studied jurisprudence at Louvain, in the Austrian Netherlands. Hence the interest in his career manifested by Count Silva-Tarouca. It is significant that when the Dutch physician came to Brussels, Kaunitz should have felt it incumbent upon him to report conviction of his skill not only to Maria Theresa, but to her preceptor. Not the least of Tarouca's qualifications for his unique position was his power of focussing his pupil's attention on this or that man of parts who might otherwise have been overlooked. Van Swieten's steadfast adherence to the Catholic faith of his fathers, though it excluded him from the honours of his profession in Holland, was naturally a recommendation to the favour of Maria Theresa.

He was still at Brussels when he intimated his acceptance of the royal invitation to Vienna. In her reply, dated November 29th, 1744, Maria Theresa says: "I am infinitely obliged to you for your care of my sister and the promptitude with which you betook yourself to Brussels. I love my only sister with a tenderness fully merited by her personal charm and nobility of character. You can therefore judge of my gratitude. I will not write anything more about our other arrangements, as I have referred you to my private secretary. He will tell you all you would like to know. I will merely state that the decision you have come to is a great satisfaction to me."

As the winter days passed on, Maria Theresa followed from afar the movements of the army which almost succeeded in cornering the redoubtable King of Prussia. At that critical juncture Prince Charles could not forsake his post, though his wife's protracted illness was giving rise to alarm. When winter brought a temporary cessation of hostilities, he at once set out for Vienna. There, on the morning of December 27th, the Queen had striven to dismiss her sad forebodings and join fervently in the public thanksgiving for the prosperous campaign. A few hours later all thoughts of triumph were forgotten in the sense of heart-breaking loss. From Brussels had come the announcement of the death of the Regent on December 17th.

It was a desolate group that assembled at the Hofburg on the last evening of the year 1744. Prince Charles had been made aware of his bereavement in the course of his journey south. To the thoughtful suggestion that his arrival in Vienna should be delayed till nightfall he willingly acceded. His sister-in-law also ordered a fresh suite of rooms to be prepared for him. The familiar apartments would, she felt, emphasize the contrast between the present and the past New Year. Her husband had a second sad communication to make to Prince Charles. The previous day had brought intelligence of the decease of their mother, the Dowager Duchess of Lorraine.

Early in January, 1745, Maria Theresa writes to Van Swieten, " God could have permitted no more terrible trial to befall me than the death of my sister. Every day increases my love for the members of my family. Time, they say, heals griefs of this kind. Time will only make me feel more keenly the greatness of my loss. Though it is the ninth month I have not suffered physically from the shock. I believe that God has purposes to fulfil through me. By His great grace I shall be upheld on the path He wills me to tread—a path of disappointment, sorrow, and weeping. I submit to what He has ordained and look for no reward in this life. Amidst the trials of my reign no thought was so sweetly consoling as that of the continuance of the dynasty in a double line. I pictured the two families mutually helpful, mutually conducive to the welfare of the monarchy. I dreamed that the fulfilment of these innocent aspirations would be the comfort of my declining years. But God has determined otherwise. To Him let me offer in sacrifice all that I ever craved for myself. . . . I must not dwell on this subject, but it was fitting that I should assure you of my lively sense of gratitude for services rendered to my sister. I also appreciate the patience with which you have endured the caprices of Engel. His conduct is simply injuring himself, while yours has inspired me with so much regard for your personal character that I have already given you more of my confidence and friendship than I would have bestowed solely out of consideration for your official position."

CHAPTER XIV

THE DEATH OF "THE BOLD BAVARIAN"—FREDERICK'S VICTORIES AT HOHENFRIEDBERG AND SOHR—THE ELECTION OF FRANCIS OF LORRAINE AND HIS CORONATION AS EMPEROR AT FRANKFORT

THE birth of Maria Theresa's second son, Charles, had no political significance, save that it provided an heir-apparent for the Grand Duchy of Tuscany. It excited little comment even in Vienna. The death of another Charles, the much-tried Emperor, was the all-absorbing topic of discussion in the early weeks of 1745.[1] During his four years' reign he had not known a single day of health or peace. An eye-witness[2] of his coronation at Frankfort remarked that the poor Kaiser could not enjoy it much. He was dying of gout and gravel and could scarcely stand on his feet. Horace Walpole proposed to call him "the new John Lackland." But the publication of Dr. Johnson's *Vanity of Human Wishes* decided that "the Bold Bavarian" should be the accepted English description of the misguided ruler. The poem tells how

> "The bold Bavarian, in a luckless hour,
> Tries the dread summits of Cæsarean power,
> With unexpected legions bursts away,
> And sees defenceless realms receive his sway:
> Short sway! Fair Austria spreads her mournful charms.
> The Queen, the Beauty, sets the world in arms;
> From hill to hill the beacon's rousing blaze
> Spreads wide the hope of plunder and of praise;

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[1] Charles VII died at Munich on January 20th.

[2] Wilhelmina, Margravine of Baireuth, eldest sister of Frederick the Great.

CHARLES VII

> The fierce Croatian and the wild Hussar,
> With all the sons of ravage, crowd the war;
> The baffled prince, in Honour's flattering bloom
> Of hasty greatness finds the fatal doom,
> His foes' derision, and his subjects' blame,
> And steals to death from anguish and from shame."

This melancholy exit reopened the question of succession to the Empire. On Maria Theresa the call for special exertion had the usual bracing effect. One cherished dream had to be sorrowfully abandoned, but here was an unexpected possibility of realizing another. There was no question that the opposition to Francis of Lorraine would be renewed. Some were of opinion that the Queen should rather seek the election of her son Joseph. She, however, would hear of no candidate but her husband. If she could but ensure his succession she would even consent to sacrifice her ambition with regard to Bavaria and come to terms with Maximilian, the son of Charles VII. He was therefore given to understand that Austria set value on his electoral vote. France, naturally antagonistic to the reunion of Austria and the Empire, endeavoured to bespeak the same vote for a rival to Francis, conceivably Maximilian himself. With diplomatists whispering at each ear the young Elector hesitated. Thereupon Maria Theresa determined to furnish him with conclusive proof of the folly of dependence on a distant ally. With a promptitude worthy of her arch-enemy she ordered that a division of the army quartered in Bohemia should be sent against the Bavarians. The feeble Electoral force was speedily overborne, Maximilian fled to Augsburg, and for the third time the miserable country was devastated by "all the sons of ravage."

Then negotiations between the Queen and the Elector were resumed. Almost with his last breath Charles VII had besought his son to put forward no claim to the Imperial Crown. Experience had proved the wisdom of the advice. In return for reinstatement in his ancestral dominions Maximilian undertook to vote for Francis of Lorraine, to guarantee the Pragmatic Sanction, and to maintain a strict neutrality till the war was over.

This was a distinct triumph for Maria Theresa. The

Bavarian vote almost implied that of the Elector of Cologne, who was a brother of the deceased Emperor. If no risk to Hanover were involved she might rely on the support of George II. Other Electors could doubtless be won over. Augustus of Poland and Saxony had even more assurance than Maximilian of the support of France and Prussia. But he was too wary to contest the Empire at their sole instigation. The star of the Queen of Hungary was obviously in the ascendant. Augustus therefore decided to abide by a recent agreement to assist her reconquest of Silesia. Russia was also coming forward on her behalf. Maria Theresa's latest plan was to carry the war into Frederick's hereditary provinces and find there the wherewithal to reward her supporters.

To Frederick himself the outlook had never seemed more ominous. Spain could not assist him, and France, his only other ally, was intent on seizing the Netherlands. Here, in May, 1745, Marshal Saxe avenged the defeat of Dettingen by the victory of Fontenoy. Had it not been for the impending election the Austrian soldiers, no longer required in Bavaria, might have been profitably utilized in Belgium. France, however, had assembled a force on the right bank of the Rhine with the evident intention of coercing the Diet at Frankfort. As Bartenstein bluntly expressed it, it would be all up with the expectations of the Grand Duke, if Austrian troops were not deputed to cover the approaches to the Imperial city. To the Rhine accordingly they were sent.

Francis was in nominal command, but the responsible strategist was Marshal Traun.

Thus, at the very time when Prince Charles was most in need of counsel, he was deprived of his long-headed coadjutor. Frederick, rendered desperate by the advance of the Russians, gathered together his forces and defeated both Austrians and Saxons at Hohenfriedberg in Silesia (June, 1745).

Mindful of his fast emptying war-chest the victor was not unduly elated. He intimated to George II that if Maria Theresa would renew the Treaty of Breslau, he was prepared to vote for her husband and definitely to abandon the French alliance. George was very willing to resume the part of mediator. His British subjects were weary of the demand for subsidies which did nothing to reduce the power of France. Sir Thomas Robinson was charged to broach the subject at Vienna. In his audience with the Queen he stated that in the course of the past year Great Britain had advanced over a million of money for the maintenance of the House of Austria. In return for this practical demonstration of friendship the English nation expected that, as France could not be detached from Prussia, Prussia should be detached from France. Thereafter a certain proportion of the 70,000 soldiers engaged against King Frederick might be employed in dislodging the French who were not only threatening the Netherlands but the very existence of the Maritime Powers in whose fall the House of Austria would be involved.[1]

The Queen listened to this harangue "with more than ordinary patience and complacency, and said, 'Nothing can equal my gratitude to the King and the English nation, and I will show it by every means in my power. But I cannot spare a man out of the King of Prussia's neighbourhood. . . .' She expressed her eagerness for another blow with him. 'Were I,' she exclaimed, 'to agree with him to-morrow, I would give him battle this evening! But why this interruption to operations by no means to be despaired of? . . . The Grand Duke is not so much ambitious as you imagine of an empty honour, much less to enjoy it under the tutelage of the King of Prussia; but I shall write to know his sentiments fully. The Imperial Dignity! is it compatible with the fatal deprivation of Silesia? Good God! give me only to the month of October; I shall then, at least, have better conditions.'"[2]

George II was a good deal embarrassed by the futility of the negotiations which he had been directing from Hanover. Apart from Austria he did not want to contract any definite agreement with an opposing Power. But the Jacobite risings obliged him to hasten back to England; and rather than jeopardize his electorate he concluded with Prussia the Convention of Hanover (August 26th, 1745). By this compact the dominions of the contracting parties were mutually guaranteed, Silesia being included amongst those of Prussia. All opposition on the part of Frederick to the election of the Grand Duke was withdrawn and an armistice of six weeks was allowed for the adhesion of Maria Theresa to the treaty.

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[1] Coxe, *House of Austria*, Vol. III, p. 319.

[2] Robinson to Lord Harrington.

"The news of this arrangement was received at Vienna with the greatest indignation. It appeared to the Queen an attempt to force upon her against her will the very terms she had scornfully rejected. She ordered her generals to pay no attention to the armistice. In expectation of peace Frederick had kept his army unemployed in Bohemia while his enemies were gathering round him."[1] He had again to fall back into Silesia, closely followed by the Austrian army. But by the River Sohr, the King turned on his pursuers and gained another decisive victory (Sept. 20th, 1745).

The unwelcome news threw a shadow over Maria Theresa's enjoyment of gay doings at Frankfort. Though baulked of the foothold in Silesia, which she had hoped to gain before October, she had achieved the object almost equally near her heart. On September 13th her husband was elected King of the Romans, the preliminary to his installation as Emperor under the title of Francis I. It was a further gratification to Her Majesty that the validity of her Bohemian vote had been acknowledged. The Grand Duke had been chosen by all the Electors save those of Brandenburg and the Palatinate, who abstained from voting. The coronation was fixed for St. Francis' Day—October 4th.

From the time when the French, outmanœuvred by Traun, returned to their own side of the Rhine the result of the election was a foregone conclusion. Throughout the month of August, Francis and his consort were engaged in a lively correspondence with regard to their respective parts in the coronation ceremonial. Germany had taken for granted that one of the features of the occasion would be an opportunity of beholding the woman whose personal charm, heroic courage, and dogged determination had made her name familiar as household words in most European countries. Her ministers had vague ideas as to how the enormous expense of her journey could be met. But in the first place there was little chance of dissuading Her Majesty from her very natural intention of witnessing the ceremonial which had more significance for her than for any one else; in the second, her non-appearance might offend the susceptibilities of her German supporters. When, however, Francis informed his wife that her own coronation as Imperial consort was regarded as certain she flatly refused to entertain the idea. Rather than be crowned she would deny herself the pleasure of going to Frankfort. Francis, in dismay, invoked the assistance of Count Ulfeld, the Chancellor of Foreign Affairs. "The Queen," says her husband, "has given me to understand that she does not intend to be crowned at Frankfort. I leave you to judge of the effect which this will produce. But I fear that rather than give way she will not come at all, which would be extremely unfortunate. For the occasion would afford her opportunities of meeting many of the Princes of the Empire, and she would know so well how to overcome their prejudices and win their goodwill. Speak to her on the subject, and persuade her that there is nothing in the ceremony incompatible with her kingly dignity."

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[1] Bright, *Maria Theresa*, p. 39.

"I have done my best," writes Ulfeld in reply, "but Your Royal Highness knows that when Her Majesty has once made up her mind there is nothing to be gained by persuasion. I could get no answer except that she refused to be crowned. Moreover, she said if she had cause to believe her presence in Frankfort would give rise to any attempt to surprise her into submission to the ceremony, she would immediately resolve to keep away. In vain did I try to find out the reason of her decision. So far as I can guess, though my guessing may be wrong, she feels that, having been twice crowned as King, there would be something derogatory in being crowned as consort. In fact, she said one day, that in the matter of coronations she would keep to the sex that had been assigned to her. I represented to Her Majesty that if it was past hope that she should change her mind, at least it would be wise not to proclaim her intention. The necessary paraphernalia could be sent on to Frankfort, and she could excuse herself at the last on account of her condition of health."

It was not an excuse which would have occurred to Maria Theresa herself. She had been crowned at Prague three months before the arrival of a former baby. But if a pretext were needed it might serve the purpose. So when Francis continued to expatiate on the anticipation of a dual ceremony at Frankfort, his consort replied, " I should feel it keenly if I did not go. But rather the disappointment than a coronation in my present condition." " All the same," says Francis, " you had better bring the regalia that was used at the crowning of the Empress Amelia, and arrange about a robe to be worn in the church." " The regalia will not be required," is the prompt response. " The robe will only be a source of inconvenience, and all these things are rendered superfluous by my original determination."

Not till she was assured of exemption from further importunity did Maria Theresa set out on the journey, which occupied a whole fortnight. As she proceeded from Vienna to Passau, and thence to Ratisbon, Nuremberg, and Würzburg, she was everywhere received with congratulatory speeches and demonstrations of enthusiasm. At Aschaffenburg, on the Main, the jolting coach was exchanged for a yacht. The Queen had expected to find her husband awaiting her; but as he did not appear she set sail. Shortly afterwards Francis, who had been delayed on the way from Heidelberg, drew rein by the river-side. Informed of his consort's departure he chartered the first available boat and set off in pursuit. The heavier vessel was soon overtaken, and there were infinite pleasure and small formality in the first meeting of the Queen and her husband since his election as Emperor. In the evening they disembarked at Phillipsruhe, within easy distance of the Imperial city.

Their journey's end was reached next morning (Sept. 25th). Francis repaired to the tent erected for his reception outside the walls of Frankfort. Maria Theresa entered the city without delay. There was no question of her welcome as she drove to the inn with the appropriate sign of the " Roman Emperor." From its balcony she watched the state entry of her husband, and joined heartily in the applause.

Two days afterwards she made her way to Heidelberg, the head-quarters of her army. "She was received by Francis himself at the head of the troops; passed between the lines, saluting each rank with her usual affability and dignity; dined in public under a tent; and, on her departure, ordered a gratuity to be given to each soldier."[1]

On returning to the Imperial residence at Frankfort, Maria Theresa gave herself without reserve to the fulfilment of her political task. During the week before the coronation, princes, ambassadors, civil and ecclesiastical dignitaries were arriving every day. They had ready access to their Majesties, and few could resist the charm of the far-famed Queen of Hungary, or refuse to admit her plea that henceforward the cause of the Habsburgs should receive the hearty support of the Empire.

Both the testimony of eye-witnesses and the tradition of after days are opposed to the description of Maria Theresa at Frankfort in Frederick the Great's *Histoire de mon Temps*. She would have defeated her own ends by "showing herself very high in her carriage toward the Princes of the Reich and their privileges." Erizzo, the Venetian Ambassador, had exceptional opportunities of observing all that took place at the time of the coronation. In his dispatches to his Government he comments on Her Majesty's success in propitiating the Princes, and reports their expressions of surprise and pleasure in meeting with a Habsburg who waived all needless ceremony and apologized, like an ordinary mortal, if the pressure of engagements made her late in beginning an audience.

It was not to be expected that the Queen should show favour to the emissaries of the King of Prussia and the Elector Palatine. The latter had just added to his offences an attempt to seize the Imperial regalia when it was being conveyed from Aix to Frankfort. The former had charged a representative to hint to his opponent that, after her defeat at Sohr, she would do well to accept the victor's terms. Maria Theresa, however, merely scoffed at the suggestion, so there was no truce to hostilities. To Frederick this rebuff was peculiarly exasperating; for, in spite of his victories, he was sorely put to it to find the means of continuing the war. He had a long memory, and when he exchanged the sword for the pen it was no unbiased historian who dealt with the people and events of his own generation.

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[1] *House of Austria*, Vol. III, p. 322.

There is certainly no foundation for Frederick's assertion that Maria Theresa strove to emphasize the fact that her husband's Imperial dignity was but a shoddy thing compared with her own hereditary sovereignty. The more trustworthy accounts of the sojourn at Frankfort indicate that the undivulged reason for her refusal to be crowned Empress was the desire to efface herself, and secure for her consort a position of undivided eminence. The clue to her motives is not the pretexts to which she resorted, but her openly expressed resentment of slighting allusions to the political position of Francis. Every indication of general interest in her own appearance at Frankfort, confirmed her determination to put it beyond dispute that the recipient of the homage of princes, and the centre of public enthusiasm, was the Emperor, and the Emperor alone.

The ill-luck that so persistently dogged the footsteps of "the Bold Bavarian" apparently assured a dull day for his coronation. Otherwise there would be little point in the stress laid by an Austrian reporter on the brilliant sunshine of October 4th, 1745. The very heavens, we are told, smiled approval of the renewal of the tie between Austria and the Empire.

As a matter of course the city was crowded to overflowing, but there could be no influx of outsiders on the day of the coronation, any more than that of the election. On the preceding evening all strangers who could not prove connection with some distinguished visitor or respectable burgher were ruthlessly expelled from the town. It was also customary to close the ghetto. The morrow's spectacle was reserved for Christian folk, many of whom doubtless relished the thought that in the absence of their Semitic fellow-citizens they were less likely to be outdone in a scuffle for advantages. And scuffles would certainly ensue for portions of oxen roasted whole, and liquid refreshment from fountains where wine, white or red according to taste, flowed from the respective beaks of two-headed Imperial eagles.

The auspicious morning found Maria Theresa installed in the balcony of a window overlooking the *Römer*, or Imperial banqueting-hall, the point where the day's celebrations began and ended. With unobstructed view she could observe, in the great square below, the assembling of exalted personages with small armies of retainers, of civil, military and ecclesiastical functionaries of the Empire with their attendant satellites, and of picked companies of soldiers. At a given signal each horseman moved to his place in the procession, which was led by the Hereditary Marshal, the sunlight giving full effect to robes of state and resplendent uniforms. It was one of the most impressive of mediæval pageants, and the special reporter frankly confesses his inability to portray it. "Let a man imagine," he says, "an innumerable succession of cavaliers, of whom the more prominent are more like gods than human beings. Let him call up every conception of magnificence and majesty, of glory and beauty, of decorative effect and perfect order. Let him add the general pleasure, joy, enchantment; then he will have a picture, albeit an imperfect and lifeless one, of what was actually to be seen that day in Frankfort."

The Emperor, still wearing his ducal mantle, rode in the middle of the procession. Maria Theresa had achieved her purpose. All eyes were turned on her husband. It was his hour of undisputed triumph.

While the procession passed on to exhibit its splendour in the course of a circuitous route to the cathedral, the Queen reached the same destination by the nearest way. Thus she was able to witness the arrival of Francis and his attendant magnificoes. The ensuing ceremony was chiefly conducted by the ecclesiastical Elector of Mayence. When the time came to hail Francis as Emperor his wife was seen to pull off her gloves that the clapping of her hands might be distinctly heard.

After the coronation she hastened back to her balcony, and stood there "beautiful beyond measure as her consort returned from the cathedral on foot. In his old-time garments he seemed like an apparition of Charlemagne. As if in jest he raised both hands to show his wife the Imperial orb, the sceptre, and the quaint gloves." The comic side of the proceedings struck Maria Theresa also, and her unrestrained laughter delighted the crowd "which was honoured by beholding the good and natural understanding between the most exalted couple in Christendom. And when the Empress, to greet her husband, waved her handkerchief and gave utterance to a very audible *vivat,* the exultation of the people reached its highest pitch, and there was no end to the cheering."[1]

For nearly a fortnight longer the Emperor and his consort remained in Frankfort, confirming the good impression they had already made on the Princes and the populace. Then by way of Heidelberg, where they took leave of the army which had so effectually guarded their interests, they journeyed to Ulm. There they went on board the vessel which was to float them down the familiar Danube. Maximilian of Bavaria had been represented by a plenipotentiary at Frankfort, but he had an opportunity of meeting their Imperial Majesties as they sailed through his electorate. The result was a complete reconciliation between Maria Theresa and her young relative. Vienna was reached on October 27th, and the landing took place amidst scenes of extraordinary enthusiasm.

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[1] Goethe, *Aus meinem Leoen.*

CHAPTER XV

THE END OF THE GREAT WAR

ON the lips of her Viennese subjects Maria Theresa's new title of Empress-Queen acquired its fullest significance. She had begun her reign with the praiseworthy aspiration that, within the realm, no grievance should be directly attributable to the substitution of female for male sovereignty. But it had surpassed her skill to prevent either Vienna's loss of the position of Imperial capital, or the vexatious connection of that circumstance with her own accession. Now, when her exertions had made the proud city once more the seat of empire, she had her reward in the unalloyed satisfaction with which she could respond to expressions of metropolitan goodwill. Her return from Frankfort was more of a homecoming than she had ever hitherto known.

With the restoration of civic prestige the unreflecting element in the population looked for a revival of civic prosperity. There was some waning of enthusiasm when it transpired that the time had not yet come for any lightening of municipal burdens; rather would they be increased for the due maintenance of Imperial dignity. Struggling bread-winners within the city were presently noting the signs of approaching winter with the same sinking of heart as the half-starved multitudes beyond the walls. So long as the able-bodied men were systematically drafted into one or other of the armies there could be no adequate tillage of the soil. The goodliest ingathering of those bleak years was the harvest reaped by Death.

Peace seemed as far off as ever in the autumn of 1745. George II threatened a withdrawal of British subsidies if the Empress persisted in holding aloof from the Convention of Hanover. She, however, replied that the tightening of

English purse-strings would not affect her determination to continue the struggle with Prussia. Preparations for a winter campaign were pushed forward. Hitherto Frederick had always struck the first blow and determined the strategy of both armies. This time Maria Theresa was resolved that Austria, in alliance with Russia and Saxony, should take the initiative. The plan agreed upon was designed to keep the main Prussian army bottled up in Silesia, while a vigorous attack was made on Frederick's hereditary dominions.

It was unfortunate in the extreme that the Empress could not herself give effect to her great ideas. She was courting disaster when she suffered her brother-in-law to retain the office of Commander-in-Chief. A charitable historian pleads that Prince Charles was "too sorely afflicted by the death of his wife to be able to pay full attention to the affairs of the field." In that case he ought to have kept in the background. At the best he was but a second-rate general. Pitted against a military genius like Frederick, he had not a ghost of a chance.

As in former campaigns, his intentions were fathomed and frustrated by the enemy. While the Empress-Queen and Augustus of Saxony-Poland were dreaming of a triumphant march to Berlin, Frederick broke out of Silesia and invaded Saxony. The victory of his able lieutenant, Leopold of Anhalt-Dessau, at Kesselsdorf was followed by the Prussian occupation of Dresden. The King-Elector fled to Prague. From thence he signified his readiness to purchase the evacuation of Saxony by acceptance of the Convention of Hanover. In the circumstances Maria Theresa could no longer refuse her own assent to that hated compact. And this guarantee of Silesia to Frederick was confirmed by the formal Treaty of Dresden between Austria and Prussia (Dec. 25th, 1745). Glatz was likewise ceded to the victorious King. He, in return, acknowledged Francis as Emperor, and guaranteed Maria Theresa in her possessions in Germany.

The Second Silesian War was at an end, but the ancillary wars were waged as hotly as ever. British, Austrians, Dutch, and Sardinians (or rather Piedmontese) contended with the Bourbons of France and Spain in Italy, the Netherlands, India, and the high seas. After the Peace of Dresden the army of the Empress-Queen in Italy was rapidly augmented. Prince Wenzel Liechtenstein proved a capable commander, and he was ably seconded by the Irish general, Browne. The Austrians and Sardinians had little difficulty in clearing the peninsula of French and Spanish troops. So absorbed was Maria Theresa with the thought of recouping herself for the loss of Silesia by the seizure and annexation of Naples that she neglected the urgent demands of the Sea Powers for further help against France in the Netherlands. She had, indeed, sent a small force thither, but the faulty leadership of Prince Charles involved it in a series of reverses. She had taken for granted that, after the extinction of Jacobite hopes at Culloden, the British would rally to the defence of the Low Countries. They had, however, become involved in a tremendous struggle for superiority to France at sea and in India and Canada. With the Netherlands in her grasp, France was proceeding to the conquest of Holland. That country could only be saved by peace, and by 1748 "the fluctuating character of the war and the widespread and meaningless injury which it caused, gave rise to a general desire to bring it to a conclusion."

The issues had become so confused that, for the most part, the inhabitants of the countries involved had no idea why their rulers were still fighting. The enthusiasm with which England had taken up the cudgels for Maria Theresa had faded out of mind. There was no one who was not sick of hearing of the war. News of victory and news of defeat were received with the same stolid indifference. "I remember," writes Horace Walpole, "when the account came of the conquest of Cape Breton, I was stopped in my chariot and told of it. I thought the person said, 'Great Britain is taken.' 'Oh,' said I, 'I am not at all surprised at that; drive on, coachman!'"

Maria Theresa was fully alive to her own country's need of peace, but held that the spring of 1748 was no fit time for the laying down of arms. Her resentment of the Convention of Hanover was nothing to her indignation at the proposal of a European peace, which would ratify Frederick's acquisition of Silesia before she had secured an equivalent in Southern Italy. She could, however, do nothing to retard the action of the principal combatants, who intimated, one after another, that they had no further interest in continuing the war. British public opinion was satisfied by the victories of Anson and Hawke, which had destroyed the French Navy. Holland was at her last gasp. France was almost at the end of her resources, bereft of her ships, and with commerce reduced to stagnation from the British blockade of the ports. The warlike policy of Elizabeth Farnese was less popular in Spain since the accession of her stepson, Ferdinand VI.

More fatal still to the designs of Maria Theresa was the fact that a European settlement was not without attraction to the King of Sardinia. Frederick's determination that the Habsburgs should not become too strong in Germany was equalled by Charles Emanuel's determination that they should obtain no overmastering hold on Italy. His Sardinian Majesty soon fell into line with the other advocates of peace. Deserted by all her allies, the Empress was forced to renounce one of the fairest prospects of conquest which had ever opened before her.

She would have been more than mortal if she had not chafed against her position of helpless isolation, but she could not prevent the assembling of the Congress to decide the terms of peace. Kaunitz was therefore deputed to represent her at Aix-la-Chapelle, and earned her eternal gratitude by the vigour with which he opposed, stage by stage, a treaty which he knew would be repellent to her. But the British, French, and Dutch envoys had practically decided the provisions before the Congress met, and they were not to be moved by Austrian representations. Silesia and Glatz were guaranteed to Prussia. The King of Sardinia received the slice of Lombardy promised by the Treaty of Worms. Parma and Piacenza were assigned to Don Philip of Spain as an hereditary principality. In return for this concession to his son-in-law, Louis XV restored the Netherlands to Austria, the Barrier fortresses to Holland, and acknowledged Francis as Emperor, and George II as King. Madras, which had been taken by the French, was restored to England in return for Cape Breton and other British conquests in French North America.

The formal notification of the intended conditions was made to Maria Theresa by Sir Thomas Robinson on May 1st, 1748. "She scarcely allowed him time to execute his commission before she burst out in the most bitter reproaches. 'You, sir,' she exclaimed, 'who had such a share in the sacrifice of Silesia; you, who contributed more than any other person in procuring the additional cessions made to the King of Sardinia, do you still think to persuade me? No, I am neither a child nor a fool. Your accounts about the Dutch and their urgent need of peace are exaggerated. But if you will have an instant peace, make it; I can accede or I can negotiate for myself.'"[1]

Not till Maria Theresa heard that the preliminaries had been signed by the other envoys, and that further protest would be futile, was Kaunitz directed to accede to the detested stipulations. Protracted discussion of minor points delayed the conversion of the preliminaries into a definite peace. Finally, on October 16th, 1748, the representatives of England, Holland, and France affixed their signatures to the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle. Spain followed suit on October 20th, Austria on November 8th, Sardinia on November 20th. The ending of the war had almost coincided with the seventh anniversary of Frederick's invasion of Silesia.

When the contest was half over, a popular versifier supplies an answer to the queries of unlearned and ignorant men who failed to discover any method in the madness of European rulers.

> "For what have these gentry these four years been fighting
> For what have their servants been treating and writing?
> For what have their thousands been killed—would you know?
> Why to make it as 'twas they said four years ago."

A superficial examination of the Treaty might incline to a similar conclusion at the end of twice four years. But the most important issues of the war were not such as can be tabulated in formal documents. Though Maria Theresa had neither recovered Silesia nor obtained a territorial equivalent for its loss, she had gained ample compensation in other ways.

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[1] *House of Austria*, Vol. III, p. 340.

"Thanks largely to her own magnificent courage and resolution, to an endurance which had never failed, and to a determination which had been proof against all trials, the heiress of the Habsburgs had brought her inheritance safely through a sea of formidable dangers. . . . Her dominions had been welded together by the war which had done much to excite the loyalty and patriotism of the heroic Queen's subjects. It was not in Hungary only that Maria Theresa's appeal had touched an answering chord, though it was a great thing to have converted that source of weakness into a source of strength. The Imperial dignity had been won back and secured to a new line of Habsburgs."[1] For the Treaty included a general recognition of the Emperor as well as a general guarantee of the Pragmatic Sanction for all the hereditary domains of the House of Austria, save Silesia and Parma. "If clear signs were not wanting that the old Anglo-Austrian alliance had been strained almost to the breaking-point, Bavaria, hitherto an enemy and a client of France, and Saxony were now among Austria's allies. The Russian alliance had to some extent strengthened her hands against Prussia, and the attitude of the Bourbon Powers was not uncompromisingly hostile. With one Power only were Maria Theresa's relations of an unfriendly nature. Her guarantee of Silesia had been given grudgingly and reluctantly."[2] It seemed to her like condoning a robber for the seizure of booty which he made no attempt to conceal. Was such a pledge to be regarded as binding? Did it afford any real security against future invasion? Her Majesty had seen too many treaties set aside to attribute any non-breakable quality to that of Aix-la-Chapelle. Sleepless vigilance was, in her opinion, a better insurance against unscrupulous neighbours.

Maria Theresa's conception of her position is indicated by the monument at Pressburg, commemorating her close association with Hungary. It shows her at the end of the war, no longer a young Queen, but a woman of thirty, though with the crown of St. Stephen still firmly poised on her head. The horse on which she is mounted stands amidst the broken cannon and overturned hurdles of her enemies. A Hungarian magnate, on her left, points across the Danube to the great plain of Hungary, signifying that the whole country is at her service. With sword unsheathed, an hussar, on the Queen's right hand, maintains a watchful outlook towards the western frontier, lest any foe should seek to approach the Sovereign unperceived. In the future, as in the past, the bond between Maria Theresa and Hungary was to hold good—the bond whose seal was the three words inscribed on the pedestal of the monument:

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[1] *A History of Germany, 1715–1815*, p. 170.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 171.

"VITAM ET SANGUINEM."

CHAPTER XVI

MARIA THERESA AND HAUGWITZ—THE ADMINISTRATIVE AND MILITARY REFORMS

THE Austrian historian, Von Arneth, institutes a striking comparison between two periods of peace after long-continued war. The one begins in 1748, the other in 1815. The latter year restored the lordship of Europe to monarchs too slow of heart and brain to grasp the lessons of the French Revolution and the career of Napoleon. Taking their stand on a policy of repression and reaction, they ended by alienating their subjects and losing or endangering their thrones.

It was otherwise in 1748, at least in so far as the disputants for the possession of Silesia were concerned. Seldom did Maria Theresa or Frederick the Great fail to profit by premiums paid to experience. The Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle found them already engrossed with schemes for the better government of their respective countries. Frederick had exhausted his father's hoarded treasure. Maria Theresa had never been free from the humiliating necessity of extorting subsidies from allies, who saddled their gifts with hateful conditions. Both rulers aspired to the independent position of the head of a prosperous state. Both were actuated by a sense of responsibility for the welfare of the people who owed them allegiance.

Equally characteristic was Maria Theresa's determined opposition to the Treaty, which left her with a diminished patrimony, and her prompt decision to lose no time in bootless regrets when once it had been signed. "I forthwith turned my thoughts into a different channel," she says. "The internal condition of my realm absorbed my whole attention." Ever since the Peace of Dresden, a transformation of the existing system of government had been the chief object of her desire. She perceived that Frederick's success as a political adventurer was not accounted for by his definiteness of purpose, his military genius, or his well-appointed army. The secret of his tenacity was his power of commandeering the resources of his country. Very different from the centralized government of Prussia was the system by which Maria Theresa's dominions were administered. Hitherto her three crowns had merely indicated the main divisions of what was virtually a multi-monarchy. Her kingdoms and her archduchy were subdivided into Estates (or Provinces), ruled by different titles and different constitutions. The Central Government was forced to negotiate every year with the assembly of each Province in order to secure an undertaking that the stipulated amount of revenue would be forthcoming, and the stipulated number of troops would be duly supported for the next twelve months. It was a wasteful and cumbrous system. It made no provision for exceptional circumstances. It prohibited any uniformity of organization, and it afforded no real guarantee for the defence of the monarchy. The defection of Bohemia and Upper Austria in 1741 had shown how easily the local interest could supplant the national one.

To Maria Theresa it seemed that the only way to remedy this intolerable state of things was to substitute a benevolent despotism for the existing semi-feudal form of government. A benevolent despotism was the political ideal of her day. Its establishment would make the State supreme over the Estates, the welfare of the Austrian monarchy and all the peoples subject to it would be put before local interests, and a national army could then take the place of the unsatisfactory aggregate of provincial forces.

With these general ideas in her mind the Empress addressed herself to the Conference. Assuming that the need of reform was self-evident, she asked for suggestions in writing as to the best means of bringing it about. As one day followed another bringing no response to her request, she inferred that either the Ministers had not taken it seriously, or they were making it the subject of endless altercation amongst themselves. Bartenstein, indeed, took up the idea with enthusiasm, and his patient investigation of facts, which others strove to conceal, gave Maria Theresa a basis to work upon. Self-interest alone would have impelled him to support any scheme which she had at heart. The other members of the Conference did not suffer him to forget his inferior rank. His only chance of retaining power was to stand well with the Sovereign. But it had been an excellent thing for her to come under the influence of the one statesman whose purposes were best served by a monarch who made up her own mind, instead of giving way to ministerial judgment. She was ever grateful to Bartenstein for his help at this juncture. As she picturesquely expresses it, he lit and put into her hand the lamp which enabled her to see her way. By contrast she was the more disappointed not to receive some measure of support from men whom she herself had advanced to power. It was not surprising that representatives of a privileged class had no appetite for internal reform; but they forgot that they had not, like Charles VI's venerable counsellors, a peculiar claim to his daughter's forbearance. When her patience was exhausted, she turned away from the nominal advisers to the Crown, and took counsel with one who, at the moment, held no office whatsoever.

"By the extraordinary Providence of God," she says, "I had come to know Count Haugwitz, and this was the saving of the monarchy. . . . It was the Emperor who first made me acquainted with him." Francis could always appreciate a skilled financier, and as such Count William Haugwitz had approved himself during a long period of public service in Silesia. When the greater part of the province was ceded to Prussia, he became governor of the portion retained by Maria Theresa. When that likewise passed into the possession of Frederick, Haugwitz betook himself to Vienna, and was presented to the Sovereign. She was always appreciative of loyal adherence to her cause, yet, according to her own account, the ex-Governor of Silesia had to be introduced to her a second time before she really came to know him. The reason can only be surmised. Her husband's recommendation and her own acquaintance with his character made it impossible that she should be prejudiced by his outward appearance. She had probably heard from others how completely it belied

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him. His figure was ungainly. His features were heavy and immobile. A contemporary describes him as " a wise man who looked uncommonly like a fool." To the casual observer it might well seem incredible that he could elaborate a scheme of governmental reform, and demonstrate its practicality in the teeth of the most determined opposition. Yet this was his ultimate claim to renown.

For his second introduction to the Empress, Haugwitz was indebted to Count Silva-Tarouca. This conjunction of names suggests an explanation of apparent incompatibility of statement in Maria Theresa's summary of the carlier history of her reign. On the one hand she expresses unbounded gratitude to her self-chosen guardian for developing her capacity "to form a just estimate of men and events." On the other she emphasizes the fact that, in her intercourse with him, she avoided all reference to business of State with which he was not directly concerned. This limited the sphere of discussion to the Netherlands or the Italian principalities. If men already entrusted with power were exempt from criticism, how did Tarouca impart his very practical instruction? Manifestly by directing his pupil's attention to persons eligible for the service of the State, but still comparatively unknown. An examination of their qualifications was a legitimate and wholesome exercise. It tended to prevent disregard of unobtrusive merit, or hesitation as to the right man when some responsible post fell vacant. By the time Maria Theresa was driven to independent action as the sole means of ensuring domestic reform, she had learned beyond all doubt whose assistance should be invoked.

But, with her usual caution, she did not commit herself to any project of collaboration until her private secretary had interviewed Haugwitz and ascertained what steps he would advocate in order to safeguard the frontiers of the country and generally increase its preparedness for war. When it appeared that his views were almost identical with those of the Empress, he was requested to fill in the outline. "He at once produced a plan for giving practical effect to his ideas. In his opinion the security of the monarchy required an army of at least 108,000 men, and for their maintenance an annual sum of fourteen million gulden, an increase of not less than five million on the ordinary contribution from the Estates. To avoid obstruction or fluctuation in the amount of the grant, he recommended that it should be settled for a period of ten years. As all would profit by the security thus obtained, all, whether noble or peasant, cleric or layman, should pay their share of the required contribution. A compensation for the increase of the taxes might be found in the abolition of payments in kind. The Empress would thus find herself in possession of an army sufficiently strong for the purposes of the monarchy, a certain income on which to support it, and be free from all the trammels which the interference of the aristocratic Estates had hitherto laid upon her. The army would thus assume the character of a national army, and could be reorganized in the complete form which Frederick II had taught the world to be necessary for success."[1]

This comprehensive scheme was known as the Ten Years Recess. It met with the hearty approval of the Emperor and Empress, and the no less hearty detestation of the privileged classes. When the plan was brought before the Conference, its members were no longer apathetic. The advantages of their Order were at stake. The Ruler was reminded that she had sworn to maintain "the good and ancient privileges of the nobility and clergy." "*Good* privileges," she replied, "were safe enough so far as she was concerned, but immunity from taxation was not good, it was wholly evil."

The petty despots of the provinces were loud in their denunciations of the proposal to establish the unchecked supremacy of the State. They brought forward a rival plan which, though it would have simplified the existing system, would also have increased the power of the Estates and weakened that of the Central Government to a degree which the Conference as a whole could not approve. In the end the Ten Years Recess was agreed to as the lesser evil. Not the Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle, but this first victory in the campaign of reform was to Maria Theresa the chief event of 1748.

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[1] Bright, *Maria Theresa*, p. 69.

During this period of greatest activity in the life of Haugwitz, he held the post of President of the *Directorium*, or Ministry of the Interior. Its creation was the first of a series of changes designed to simplify the machinery of government, and give a further impetus to the concentration of power. Prior to 1749 the internal business of the monarchy as a whole had been managed, or more often mismanaged, by the separate Chanceries of Austria, Bohemia, and Hungary. In these departments of State there was no more public spirit than in the local governments. The Chanceries vied with each other in their efforts to divert the burden of taxation from the countries whose affairs they were appointed to administer. Each was ready to sacrifice the national interest to that of its own division of the triple monarchy.

Had this system remained in force the labour of Haugwitz would have been doubled. But Maria Theresa was weary of its inefficiency and dilatoriness. An opportunity of extending the sphere of reform occurred almost immediately after the decision in favour of the Ten Years Recess. The Chancellor of Bohemia died. It was decided to appoint no successor, but to amalgamate the Austrian and Bohemian Chanceries into the *Directorium*. Thus Haugwitz obtained the vantage-ground from which he could exercise control over provincial administration, and give full effect to his great scheme.

Its immediate result was the reorganization of the army. The Prussian system was taken as a model. "The army was brought completely under the control of the Sovereign. Uniformity and system were introduced into its establishments, uniforms, pay, weapons and interior economy. A much more careful military training was introduced. Camps of exercise were started, manœuvres were held. Officers were given a chance of studying their profession, though unfortunately the restriction of commissions to men of noble birth was maintained. A modified conscription assured the means of keeping the regiments up to their establishment. But in no department was so much improvement effected as in the artillery. Thanks to the enthusiasm and energy of the Director-General of Ordnance, Prince Wenzel Liechtenstein, and to the generosity with which he drew on his own resources when those of the State were inadequate, the artillery of Austria had soon no need to fear comparison with that of other armies."[1]

Maria Theresa's exultation in the new sense of military strength made her all the more eager to press forward in other paths of reform. In all branches of the government, Haugwitz recommended changes of which her judgment approved. The management of the indirect taxes, and the taxes upon commodities for consumption and kindred subjects, devolved upon the Bohemian financier, Count Rudolf Chotek. Between Haugwitz and Chotek there was much rivalry, not to say downright antagonism. Nevertheless, both worked in the same direction. The Bohemian reformer did much to increase the indirect revenue by giving encouragement to trade and manufactures. Recognizing that the strength of a country lies chiefly in the well-being of the people, he devoted himself zealously to promote it by measures which tended always to the unification of the monarchy and the supremacy of the State.[2]

"These wide-spreading reforms, falling little short of the reconstitution of the country upon a new and more modern basis, were confined to the central provinces of the Austrian Empire. There are abundant indications that Maria Theresa would gladly have extended them to her three great outlying territories—Hungary, Lombardy, and the Netherlands." But in all three her position was very different from that which she held in Austria and Bohemia. "In Hungary she found herself at the head of a free people, or rather a predominant aristocracy, who regarded with intense jealousy any infringement of their privileges, any step which threatened to assimilate their country to the other less-favoured portions of their sovereign's dominions. . . ." Nevertheless it was impossible for a ruler with a keen sense of justice and a strong desire for the unity of her territories to see burdens laid with an unsparing hand on one part of the Empire, while a second part, as well able to bear them, was allowed to remain comparatively free. When rearranging her revenue Maria Theresa had been struck by the fact that the contribution of Hungary amounted to little more than a third of that paid by Bohemia, although in territory, wealth, and population it was the richer country of the two."[1] She had been careful to cultivate the friendly relations which she had established with her Magyar subjects. "She had attached to herself and her Court, in a way unknown to her predecessors, many of the great Hungarian nobles; and trusting to their support, in spite of warnings given her by some of them, she determined to attempt the removal of the injustice which had struck her," and was very hopeful of success. "The Diet of 1751 showed her the vanity of this hope. Though she gave up all idea of bringing the nobles within the limits of taxation, though she demanded only a very moderate increase to the contribution, and though she enjoyed the full support of the Upper House of Magnates, her proposal met with a storm of opposition. The contest raged for many weeks. . . . Eventually a sort of compromise was arrived at. The Empress accepted about half the sum she had demanded. Any attempt to limit the power of the nobles," to induce them to shoulder a part of the burden of the State, "or to introduce a well-ordered administration having its source in the Sovereign, was laid aside."[2] The saying remained true that "Austria had an administration, but no constitution; while Hungary had a constitution, but no administration."

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[1] *A History of Germany, 1715–1815*, p. 176.

[2] *See* Bright, *Maria Theresa*, p. 74.

Carlyle's contention that Frederick the Great never spoke of Maria Theresa otherwise than as a gentleman can easily be disproved. At the bidding of interest or caprice Frederick did not hesitate to misrepresent his opponent, or make her the butt of his ridicule. There is, however, a passage in his *Histoire de mon Temps*, in which he expresses generous approval of her policy of reform. "Maria Theresa," he says, "prepared in the secrecy of the Cabinet those great projects which she afterwards carried into execution. She introduced an order and economy into her finances unknown to her ancestors; and her revenues far exceeded those possessed by her father, even when he was master of Naples, Parma, Silesia, and Servia. Having learned the necessity of introducing into her army a better discipline, she annually formed camps in the provinces, which she visited herself, that she might animate the troops by her presence and bounty. She established a military academy in Vienna, and collected the most skilful professors of all the sciences and exercises which tend to elucidate or improve the art of war. By these institutions the army acquired under the auspices of Maria Theresa such a degree of perfection as it had never attained under any of her predecessors, and a woman accomplished designs worthy of a great man."

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[1] Bright, *Maria Theresa*, pp. 74–79.

[2] Bright, *ib.*, pp. 77–80.

CHAPTER XVII

THE IMPERIAL HOUSEHOLD IN 1748

MARIA THERESA'S success as a "King" is the more astounding when it is remembered how much of her energy was flowing into the channels of social and family life. When the Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle acknowledged her claim to the throne of her ancestors, the new Habsburg-Lorraine branch of the Austrian dynasty was well supplied with promising shoots. Archduke Joseph had two brothers, Charles and Leopold; and not only an elder sister, but three younger ones—Marie Christine, Elizabeth, and Amelia. They were a healthy little flock, thanks largely to their mother's discovery of the connection between physical fitness and fresh air.

As applied to herself, Maria Theresa had also reason to be satisfied with a system which had other excellent features besides open windows. For a quarter of a century after her accession she enjoyed the happy consciousness of a strength equal to all demands upon it. Admonitions about sparing herself were utterly thrown away. She either made light of the necessity, or dismissed the subject by declaring that she had a work to do and a charmed life until it was accomplished. This, in the end, came to be the accepted belief, and it ceased to excite remark if the Empress were at the opera or some other fatiguing function one day, and in child-bed the next. Under the care of Van Swieten she recovered with ease and expedition from her many experiences of maternity. Almost before her coach had been missed on the road, between Vienna and her favourite Palace of Schönbrunn, she was driving past again—not at the slow pace favoured by former monarchs, but with a rapidity vainly represented to her as dangerous.

When the events of 1748 brought to a close the first part of the story of her reign, she had reached the age of thirty-one. Her instinctive obedience to the laws of health, and her escape from the wellnigh universal smallpox, had enabled her to retain much of her beauty of feature and complexion, though she had lost all pretension to slenderness of form. She was, however, far removed from the unpleasing rotundity of her cousin, the widow of Charles VII, who was said to be "so corpulent that she looked like a ball." Maria Theresa's erect, easy carriage gave her the full advantage of her height. When five more years had passed over her head, the English Ambassador, Sir Charles Hanbury Williams, could still testify that "her person was made to wear a crown and her mind to give lustre to it. Her countenance," he continues, "is filled with sense, spirit, and sweetness, and all her motions are accompanied with grace and dignity."

In a teasing mood she no doubt reproached her "little Preceptor" for inciting her to slothfulness by the suggestion that eight o'clock was the time when a monarch should bestir herself. She soon felt the necessity for a longer day. As the demands upon her time multiplied, she drew more extensively from the hours of sleep. At last it became a settled thing that she should rise at five o'clock in summer, and "a trifle later" in winter.

This naturally involved still earlier hours on the part of those who had to prepare her apartments and assist her to dress. Her personal attendants were young women of good family and narrow means, in whose welfare she took a kindly interest, and whose marriages she ultimately arranged. To ensure them a sufficiency of rest and relaxation, only half of them went on duty each morning. Those whose turn it was to answer the summons of the Empress's bell had to appear in faultless order, and wearing the regulation silk gowns. They had need of all their wits and talents to discharge aright the combined functions of tirewomen, readers, and supernumerary secretaries. The constant race with time made Maria Theresa an exacting mistress. Given intelligence, method, dispatch, and a knowledge of languages, it was possible to satisfy the reading and secretarial demands; but the half-hour of Her

Majesty's toilet was dreaded by all her attendants. So far as she herself was concerned, she cared little for personal adornment; but the very natural desire to be pleasing in the eyes of her husband was intensified by the consciousness that he was not so indifferent as she could have wished to the charms of other women. His admiration for the shining masses of her hair made her excessively particular about its arrangement. With the best will in the world it was not always possible for the damsels-in-waiting to achieve artistic effects in a very limited time. Yet failure to satisfy Her Majesty in this respect boded ill for the ensuing hours. Finally it was observed that a certain Caroline von Hieronymus had more skill than her companions in the elaborate hairdressing then in vogue. So the luckless girl was made wholly responsible for the trying task, and had to leave her bed in the small hours of every morning and make shift with what was left of her alternate days of freedom when the critical stage of the Imperial toilet was over. "Glorious slavery" was her subsequent description of her life at the Austrian Court. Not till after her marriage did she come to know "the joy of belonging to herself."

Private devotions, dressing, attendance at Mass, and breakfast, consisting of little more than a cup of coffee, were crammed into the first hour of Maria Theresa's day. Then followed three to four hours of close application to the pile of documents awaiting her inspection. All the reports of State officials, the dispatches of ambassadors, and the petitions of her subjects were submitted to her. They were returned to the proper quarters with profuse marginal annotations, generally in the language of the document under review. Thus routine business was either well in hand or wholly disposed of before the interval during which the Empress said "Good morning" to her children. In the latter part of the forenoon her work was more varied. For one thing it comprised attendance at meetings of the Conference. The subjects for special consideration were dictated by her beforehand; and she not only occupied the seat of President, but took full part in the deliberations. Another morning occupation was the granting of interviews to a host of minor functionaries. Ministers of State were not received in the early part of the day save for some extraordinary reason. Each of them had his own appointed afternoon for consultation with the Sovereign.

The midday dinner was Maria Theresa's first solid meal. But the pleasures of the table were not her pleasures. At all times she ate and drank sparingly, preferring lemonade to wine, and fruit to quantities of meat. Her candid opinion of the Gargantuan feasts, given in her honour by "the first persons of quality," could not fail to be edifying. If, in Austria, a simple ambassadress, like Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, was "more than once entertained with fifty dishes of meat, all well-dressed, the dessert proportionable," and a choice of eighteen different sorts of wine, one can vaguely guess at the lavishness and slaughter incidental to the entertainment of an Empress.

In the time-table drawn up by Count Silva-Tarouca for the guidance of his pupil, there are three intervals for rest. In Maria Theresa's amended version the leisure hours became a "great Perhaps." The time between dinner and the afternoon audiences of the Ministers was still, as a rule, spent with her family; but it was one thing to listen to the prattle of a single child, and another to be surrounded by a group of young hopefuls, all needing to be taken in hand by their mother, to make up for undue indulgence on the part of their other parent.

Descriptions of the Empress-Queen as a sort of political "Mrs. Jellyby" are based on the flimsiest of assumptions. No one familiar with her instructions for each succeeding Governor and Governess, or her correspondence with her children themselves in after-life, could doubt the sincerity of her love for them, or her interest in everything that concerned them. In all her directions for their upbringing there is a perceptible endeavour to discover a happy medium between pampering and harshness. "Set out to gain the children's respect and confidence, and there will be no difficulty in winning their affection," is an oft-repeated admonition to their guardians, and the key to her own relations with her sons and daughters. She suggests various amusements for them by way of reward for good conduct. She insists that those who have access to the Imperial nursery should learn to bridle their tongues, lest immature minds be filled with vague terrors. Remembering the bugbears of her own childhood, she expressly forbids "all foolish nonsense about ghosts and witches, as well as tales of disaster in fires and thunderstorms." She sees no reason why the children should not be told of an illness in the household, but they are to hear no harrowing details. "Even smallpox and death" may be mentioned before them, but as natural and not necessarily terrifying experiences.

In her efforts to safeguard the infant imagination, Maria Theresa was in advance of most mothers of her day. But she could hardly have attained more than partial success. Superstition was rampant in every class of Austrian society. In the absence of intellectual interests, even men and women of exalted position lent themselves to practices more in keeping with the Middle Ages than the eighteenth century. "The doctrine of familiar spirits had its votaries and believers. . . . A fact not less incredible was the eagerness and anxiety with which the philosopher's stone was sought after by the first persons in Vienna."[1] The Emperor, always on the look-out for pecuniary advantages, extended his patronage to more than one plausible alchemist. His children, whatever their faults, were by no means dull. It cannot therefore be supposed that they had not an inkling of the subjects so constantly discussed by their seniors.

The anxiety felt by the Empress at the least appearance of indisposition in any member of the little company was natural to one who had been so suddenly bereaved of two children. Every day Van Swieten made a round of inspection among the Archdukes and Archduchesses, and wrote out a report for their mother. If, in the interim, any accident occurred or untoward symptom manifested itself, the physician had to be recalled at once, and word sent to the Empress, "no matter what the hour of day or night." Precautions were not taken in vain. With the exception of Charles, the second son, the children who were alive in 1748 survived both their parents.

Marianne, the eldest, now ten years old, required more doctoring than any of her brothers and sisters. At times it seemed as if there could be no recovery from her sharp attacks of illness, and Maria Theresa's sorrowful letters reveal the depth of her affection for the first of the rising generation who was in any sense a companion to her. Marianne was also a link with the days before her mother's accession, and she had been a favourite with the young aunt for whom she was named. In after years she was rather put in the shade by the gifts and graces of her younger sister, Marie Christine. Archduchess Marie was the latter's formal designation, but in the intimacy of the family circle she was known as "Mimi." The pet-name lingered on her mother's lips and in her mother's letters long after childhood was past.

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[1] Wraxall, *Memoirs of the Court of Vienna.*

The "little squirrel" of 1741 was a strong, lively, wilful youngster seven years later. From the day of his birth he had been an object of flattering attention. Now, like another Joseph, he was ready to believe that the sun, moon, and stars should bow down to him. He was at once the delight and the despair of his teachers, for he learned and forgot with equal celerity. The comic side of things appealed to him, and his thoughtless remarks wounded tender susceptibilities. Yet he had an affectionate nature, "a good heart," as his mother expressed it. She was by no means blind to the shortcomings of this "dear and precious" hostage to fortune; but she hoped for rapid improvement when he was transferred from the guardianship of women to that of her Hungarian Field-Marshal, Count Charles Batthyany.

Under the new regime Joseph learned to take an intelligent and even enthusiastic interest in everything that pertained to the army, otherwise he owed little to his official tutor. Batthyany's outlook and methods were those of a soldier pure and simple. He could not understand that no amount of dragooning would overcome the self-will of a high-spirited youth. It merely checked the boy's natural frankness of disposition, and caused him to lean too exclusively on his own understanding—a tendency destined to bear bitter fruit in days to come. As Joseph grew older, a host of tutors, professors, and abbés were set to co-operate with Batthyany. They met in solemn conclave, and cackled over the Prince, whose nature they failed to fathom. They compiled for his benefit a dry compendium of law, and another of metaphysics, and marvelled at his lack of appetite for these husks of learning. In the multitude of teachers, a few were really competent. The professor of mathematics was amongst the first to commend his subject to the Archduke. After a while history, too, became a favourite study; for Bartenstein, who had been drawn into the consultations, had the wit to suggest that the lecturer should throw over the Assyrians and Persians and expound the annals of Germany. When it was objected that there was no suitable text-book, the indefatigable Bartenstein set to work to supply the deficiency. Once his interest was aroused, Joseph's record as a student became fairly creditable.

Of all the preposterous charges brought against the Empress-Queen, the most absurd is that of neglecting the education of the heir to her throne. Her letters, memoranda, and instructions on this subject bear witness to a consuming anxiety that her successor should come to his task with a thorough mental equipment. Of education as a means of culture Maria Theresa had no conception, but she was very much alive to its utilitarian advantages, and was overjoyed when the soldiers and pedagogues to whom she entrusted her son turned out a well-informed and obviously capable Crown Prince. In noting his points of resemblance to herself she lost sight of the fact that, after all, he was only half a Habsburg. From his father's side of the family he had inherited two gifts which were apt to bring him into conflict with Habsburg tradition—a sense of humour and a strong philosophic bent.

Careful provision was also made for the training of the younger Archdukes. In their mother's minute directions to their Governors the boys seem to live again—Charles, with his captivating ways and his wandering attention; and Leopold childish, awkward, and quarrelsome. It says much for their schooling that the latter boy should have developed into the most popular and successful of the foreign rulers of Tuscany.

The worst features of the utilitarian system of education appear in Maria Theresa's way of bringing up her daughters. Because they were not, like herself, predestined to a man's work, but to become the consorts of reigning princes, it was considered that the ordinary modicum of learning would serve their turn. Moreover, in their mother's opinion, it involved less risk of their becoming unduly self-assertive. Before all things a princess must be docile, ready to adapt herself to the ways of a strange Court, and slow to criticize her husband or his relatives. Accordingly, the young Archduchesses learned to play and sing and dance, to take part in operettas on Imperial birthdays, and to know something of several languages. Anything else was a mere smattering. Only artistic gifts had a chance of development. Archduchess Marie's skill in drawing and painting gave her an interest in life that was lacking to her less obviously talented sisters, and goes far to explain her brightness and popularity.

A comparison of the letters of the sons and daughters of the Empress-Queen would of itself suffice to show that different methods of instruction were at work. While still in their boyhood the elder Archdukes express themselves with comparative facility, and in striking contrast to the laboured efforts of the fifteen-year-old Marie Antoinette.

Although decisions with regard to the establishments and education of the Imperial children rested with the head of the State, no step of any importance was taken without the advice and concurrence of the Emperor. The co-regency was one of the subjects on which Maria Theresa permitted herself a few illusions. Throughout the war she had dreamed of a time when her husband should again be her fellow-worker, as in the first weeks of her reign. But each succeeding year of divergent activity made a return to former conditions less practicable. It would therefore have been better for Francis had he suffered himself to be dissuaded from taking part in the later campaigns. For by commanding an army he did not learn how to command, whereas by ruling, his consort was learning how to rule, and to rule alone. When the prospect of peace put an end to their recurrent separations, husband and wife entered on a critical stage in their relationship.

To Maria Theresa, overjoyed that the will-o'-the-wisp of military glory could no longer lure her companion from her side, it seemed at first as if the dream had indeed come true. After nearly thirteen years of wedlock she was still the passionate lover of her husband. The day was a veritable day, and not a mere space of time, when she could meet him in the chapel, at the council-chamber, and the dining-hall, and be prominently allied with him in the social life of the evenings. His popularity in Vienna was to her a source of purest satisfaction. Elsewhere it might be interpreted as mere homage to a Queen's consort, or an Emperor. In Vienna it was mainly the outcome of opportunities of seeing Francis at his best. A sudden calamity —a fire or flood—had always found him ready to play the man. A typical instance occurred in the year 1744, when the Danube overflowed its banks, and the low-lying suburbs were inundated. Many could only escape the rising waters by clambering on to the roofs of their dwellings. There they remained huddled up for three days, without food, and in imminent danger of being swept away. A reward was offered for their rescue, but the boatmen hung back. Even if it were possible to stem the current of the turbulent river, they feared the risk of collision with the masses of ice and debris that were being carried down stream.

When this came to the ears of Francis he promptly betook himself to the river-side. Rescue might prove impossible, he said, but at least it should be attempted. Seating himself in the nearest boat, he ordered the rowers to convey him to the half-submerged houses. There were no more faint hearts amongst the navigators. Without waiting to see if the first boat met with any insuperable difficulty, others were launched. Francis was able to hand over the first supply of provisions to the victims of the flood, and point to those who were following him to complete the work of relief and rescue.[1]

But courage which takes no account of personal risk, must be balanced by more stability of character than was possessed by the hero of the flood, if it is not to overleap moral bounds as well as physical obstructions. Had Maria Theresa chosen to drop her glove into a haunt of lions, Francis was quite capable of recovering it without an unseemly fuss. He had given her a more striking proof of devotion when he signed away his patrimony for her sake. Yet he grieved her often by stumbling amongst the pitfalls of everyday life. His lapses from conjugal fidelity cannot be explained away, neither can the plea of extenuating circumstances be overlooked.

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[1] Similar inundations occurred at intervals for nearly a century after the reign of the Empress-Queen. Since 1877, however, the Danube has flowed past Vienna in an artificial channel of sufficient depth to restrain its waters in time of flood.

The world would have been a simpler and happier place for Kaiser Franz, if Maria Theresa's conception of wifely duty had not kept her from owning, even to herself, that he was not of the stuff out of which the pillars of a great monarchy are fashioned. He had the benevolence which would have made a small state happy, and the business instincts which would have made it prosperous. But Lorraine had been taken from him, and his consort frowned whenever he proposed to revisit Tuscany. The Empire afforded him no resource. In the tussle over the election of "The Bold Bavarian," the last shred of Imperial authority had been torn away. Francis was thus left with no absorbing public duties to counteract the prompting of an easygoing disposition. If he occasionally conformed to the eighteenth-century standard of morality for princes, the predisposing cause seems to have been sheer craving for distraction. He showed no trace of the profligacy of his father or his uncle, the Regent Orleans, and indulged in more gallivanting than actual wrongdoing. By the purveyor of Court gossip his aberrations have been as wildly exaggerated as the resentment of his wife. Like Francis' Lord Castlewood,[1] the Emperor Francis was "a jolly gentleman, with very little of the august or divine in his nature, though his fond wife persisted in revering it. And, besides, he had to pay a penalty for this love, which persons of his disposition seldom like to defray; and, in a word, if he had a loving wife, had a very jealous and exacting one." Fortunately she was much too wise to take up an injured attitude. "Avoid reproaches, long explanations, and, above all, disputes," is her advice to an aggrieved wife. "It is possible to be gentle and tender, and yet make it quite clear how much we are pained by certain things. Having once given expression to our feelings, without bitterness or airs of superiority, perhaps even with a caress, it is safer to maintain silence."

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[1] *See* Thackeray's *Esmond.*

From the Empress the members of her social environment took their cue. In former days Countess Althan had exercised considerable influence as the mistress of Charles VI. But the women who inspired a fleeting interest in Francis I had no influence whatsoever, and were vaguely referred to as "the Emperor's friends." In her inmost heart Maria Theresa knew that she had no rival in her husband's affection. Not for long could he endure the sense of her disapproval. If he failed to appease her by confessing himself in the wrong, he would coax their old friend Countess Fuchs to assume the office of mediator. To the apartments of the Mistress of the Household he often resorted, when weary of even the modified ceremoniousness of the Court. Her daughters were pleasant, intelligent women, and they cannot be reckoned among the Emperor's dangerous "friends." The elder of the two was married to Count Leopold Daun, who had already given proof of the military skill which was to secure him a place of his own in the history of his country.

So long as the war lasted, Francis was closely associated with his brother Charles. Early in 1749 the latter took up his residence in Brussels. As a defender of the Netherlands he had cut a poor figure. Backed up by ministers dispatched from Vienna, he proved an acceptable and satisfactory Viceroy.

After the departure of Charles, the Emperor made a more frequent companion of his only surviving sister, Charlotte of Lorraine. Since the death of her mother, in 1745, she had been a member of the Imperial household. Yet it is not surprising that she never came to feel at home in Vienna. Her devotion to her brother could not bring her into touch with a sister-in-law who was reluctant to make room for the most innocent worshipper at her husband's shrine. Of the contrast between herself and that same handsome sister-in-law the Princess was painfully aware. Her Serene Highness was a tall, spare woman, with just sufficient resemblance to the Emperor to suggest that she might have been passably good-looking but for the ravages of smallpox. Her patriotism may have been a link between her and Maria Theresa, but of that there is no certainty. The failure to recapture Lorraine was a sore point with the

Empress-Queen, and when the homesick Charlotte declared that she would gladly travel barefoot like a pilgrim, if the way led back to the land of her nativity, the chances are that she received scant sympathy.

Still, her sojourn at the Habsburg Court was not without its compensations. There were red-letter days, when the Emperor contrived that he and his sister should dodge their official attendants, and go for a walk by themselves on the fortifications of Vienna or in the country about Schönbrunn. Charlotte's comprehension of her brother's restless moods made it easy for him to confide in her, and he was profoundly grieved when she could no longer be prevailed upon to share his family life. The plea to be provided for elsewhere, which she urged in 1753, was entirely reasonable. Her nieces were growing up—Marianne was fifteen, Marie eleven—they could no longer be kept in the background. Dearly as she loved them, Princess Charlotte was not prepared to be always giving place to these sprightly young creatures. She could guess at the mocking comments that would be suggested by the contrast between their girlish prettiness and her own gaunt figure and haggard features. Her brother Charles was evidently sincere in his determination to put no second wife in the place of the young princess who had been in her tomb for eight years. In the Netherlands Charlotte would certainly have more scope than in Austria. At first Maria Theresa joined her husband in entreating their guest to reconsider her decision. Finding that the latter had made up her mind to leave them, the Empress generously made over one of her own sinecures to her sister-in-law, who thus became titular superior of a religious foundation for women of rank at Mons. In September, 1754, the Empress, as Queen of Bohemia, agreed to inaugurate a similar institution at Prague. She was accompanied by the Emperor and his sister. From the Bohemian capital Charlotte continued her journey to Belgium, but she returned at intervals to visit her Habsburg relatives.

No picture of the Imperial household in 1748 would be complete if it did not include the Dowager-Empress. Though only fifty-five years of age, Elizabeth of Brunswick looked like a much older woman. Her regular features and beautiful hands were the only relics of former loveliness. Her hair was perfectly white, her complexion florid. Her inclination to stoutness had been accentuated by a dropsical affection till any movement was a difficulty. Indeed, she regarded herself as a representative of a past epoch. Naturally it was an epoch of greater glory for the House of Habsburg than that which had taken its place. But it must be remembered that Elizabeth had a little political influence in the reign of her husband, whereas she had none at all in that of his successor. Yet she clung with pathetic confidence to her strong, capable daughter, who returned her affection, and made ample provision for her comfort. In spite of precarious health, the elder Empress retained her cheerfulness and her kindliness of disposition. She was a great favourite with her grandchildren. Doubtless she found them even more diverting than the hideous dwarfs and the half-tipsy parrots[1] that vanished with herself from the precincts of the Austrian Court. The death of Elizabeth in December, 1750, had no significance for the world in general, though it left a great blank in the life of Maria Theresa, now the last of the family of Charles VI.

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[1] In a return of the annual expenditure of the Court of Charles VI, there is special mention of a provision of wine for the sops of the Empress Elizabeth's parrots.

CHAPTER XVIII

MARIA THERESA'S CAPITAL

ONLY on the occasion of her visit to Florence was Maria Theresa away from Vienna in the winter season. Her love of Schönbrunn was something quite different from her pride in the ancient capital of her dynasty. Few cities were so clearly predestined to greatness. The strategic importance of its position was fully recognized by the Romans. It is apparent to any observant individual who takes his stand on one of the low hills that overlook the town. The wooded slopes at his feet are the outposts of the Eastern Alps. Across the plain the western spurs of the Carpathians are clearly visible. Through the prehistoric cleft, in what was originally a continuous mountain-range, flows the broad Danube, with its offer of facile intercourse between Eastern and Western Europe. Vienna is seen to be a city with a vocation. To her it was given to keep watch like a sentinel at this gateway of the nations.

Time after time she played her part in the struggle of the early rulers of Austria to stay the advance of Magyars, Wends, and other would-be invaders. Their success in retaining possession of their debatable land is a striking testimony to their ability. They showed no special favour to Vienna. She was merely an important link in their chain of fortresses. Her first advance to independent fame is associated with the era of the Crusades. Each successive wave of enthusiasm for the recovery of the Holy Sepulchre brought hosts of eastward-bound warriors down the Danube valley. The leaders of the several armies were hospitably entertained by the Babenberg margraves.[1] The plain about Vienna was a popular camping-ground. Without forfeiting its military reputation, the city became a recognized trading centre, and was extended to meet the needs of a growing population.

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[1] *See* Genealogical Introduction.

The reigning Margrave of Austria, Heinrich Jasomirgott, was one of the few who returned in safety from the disastrous second Crusade. He had borne himself bravely, won the friendship of the Emperor Conrad III, and received the title of Duke. Under his rule Austria entered on a period of wise and ordered government. Vienna was declared to be the ducal capital. A new castle was erected to serve as a princely residence rather than a place of defence. A little chapel, dedicated to St. Stephen, made way for a great minster church.

A simple wall with towers surrounded the capital of the first Duke of Austria. The city outgrew its wall in the reign of his son, Duke Leopold. The cost of its extension was defrayed by English money. For Leopold was a public-spirited ruler, who made no selfish use of his share of the ransom of Richard I of England. The romantic story of Richard's imprisonment has little foundation in fact. After about two months' captivity in Austria he was transferred to the custody of the Emperor. This does not allow for much seeking on the part of Blondel.

Had Cœur de Lion's place of detention been veritably unknown to his friends, no one would have the same good chance of discovering it as a wandering bard. Blondel might have penetrated in safety to the Court of Leopold himself, where *Minnesingers,* or strolling minstrels, seem to have taken up their abode for indefinite periods. Leopold's son received as an honoured guest the greatest lyric poet of all the *Minnesingers,* Walter von der Vogelweide. The last Babenberg duke, Frederick the Warlike, was a patron of the half-legendary Tannhäuser.

The taking of Vienna by Rudolf of Habsburg, in 1276, was associated with a terrible outbreak of fire. Rudolf himself had little time to consider schemes of reconstruction, but not a few of his successors were enthusiastic builders. The twelfth-century church of St. Stephen had been destroyed. On its site the choir of the existing cathedral was erected early in the fourteenth century. Duke Rudolf IV (1356–65), the founder of the University of Vienna, ordered the preparation of plans for the completion of St. Stephen's. He laid the foundation of the nave, also, it is believed, of the great south tower. A city so liable to attack as Vienna had to be kept within limits of possible defence. The fortifications, which formed the boundary of the inner city till 1857, were probably marked out before the Habsburgs established their supremacy in Austria. Under their direction the walls of the capital were built strong and high, and surrounded by earthworks.[1] Every precaution was needful, especially after 1453, when the ambition of the Turks was a constant menace to the peace and safety of Austria. Twice Vienna was called upon to withstand the attack of Moslem invaders. But for the timely raising of the siege in 1683, the mediæval city would have been wiped out. With great breaches in its fortifications and ruins everywhere, it was almost at the mercy of the enemy. Fortunately the cathedral and some other notable buildings escaped destruction.

Here was an opportunity for the architect similar to that afforded by the Great Fire of London. Three names are prominently associated with the restoration of Vienna: they are those of Bernard Fischer von Erlach, his son Emanuel, and Lucas von Hildebrand. As a suburban residence for Prince Eugene, Hildebrand built the Belvedere. He also had a share in the erection of new town palaces for the great nobles. The two Fischers were even more esteemed as the designers of town and country houses. But their work in Vienna is seen at its best in the Church of St. Peter, with its fine dome, the Church of St. Charles Borromeo, and in certain noteworthy additions to the Hofburg. Thus they are responsible for the Palace of the Imperial Chancellor, with its curved façade and fine iron gateway that gives access to the group of quadrangles round which are built the earlier and later portions of the residence of the Habsburg emperors. The Imperial Library, a most important adjunct to the Hofburg, likewise perpetuates the name of Fischer von Erlach.

Excepting the Church of St. Peter, all these buildings

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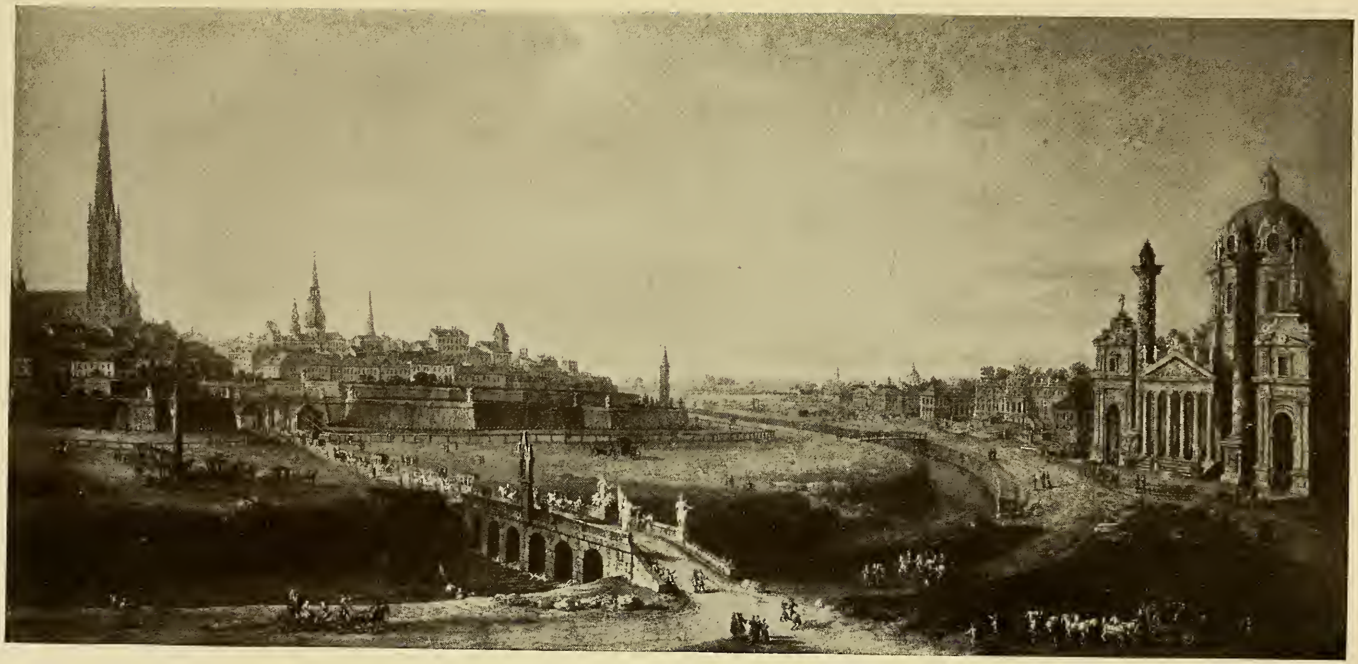
[1] As "Vienna's fatal walls" they are referred to in *In Memoriam.* They remained standing for over twenty years after the sudden death of Arthur Hallam within their precincts. Eventually they gave place to a circular boulevard—the Ring Strasse of modern Vienna.



VIENNA IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

SHOWING THE CHURCH OF ST. CHARLES BORROMEO AND THE FORTIFICATIONS

belong to the reign of Charles VI. He was keenly interested in the progress of the church dedicated to his patron saint, Charles Borromeo. Begun in the early part of the Emperor's reign, as a thank-offering for the cessation of plague, it was completed shortly before his death. The two colossal columns flanking its portico single it out from other churches. In the days before the levelling of the fortifications and the advance of the suburbs towards the city, the *Karlskirche* dominated the entire district south of Vienna.

The great siege had involved the wholesale destruction of the existing suburbs, so for fear of any future investment of the capital it was decreed that "no houses without the walls were to be built nearer the glacis than six hundred yards." There is, therefore, says a visitor to Vienna in the days of Maria Theresa,[1] "a circular field, six hundred paces broad, all round the town, which, exclusive of the advantage of minimizing danger in a siege, has a very beautiful and salutary effect. Beyond the plain the suburbs are built. They form a very extensive and magnificent town of an irregularly circular form, containing within its bosom a spacious field, which has for its centre the original town of Vienna. These suburbs and the town together are said to contain 300,000 inhabitants."

Another enthusiastic spectator evidently familiar with the view of the Austrian capital from the neighbouring hills, compares Vienna to "an ornament in the form of a star, its centre a cluster of diamonds, surrounded by a band of emeralds, from which long rays of many-coloured gems proceed in all directions."

Very different was the impression of those whose first glimpse of the *Kaiserstadt* was obtained from the river or the plain. They were naturally disappointed when the city which had bulked so large in their imagination merely presented the aspect of a huge fortress. Yet there was promise of interest within the circumscribed space. Above the ramparts and walls appeared the gables of tall houses and the turrets of palaces. From these the eye was attracted to the steeples and domes of many churches, the great spire of St. Stephen's outsoaring them all.

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[1] Dr. John Moore.

It must be admitted that the preliminary exaction of payment under the name of Customs, and the abstraction of every printed volume for inspection by the censor, were not calculated to prepossess the weary traveller in favour of Vienna. Says one exasperated Briton,[1] "We passed along a dusty suburb round the town, which is as ugly as anything can be, to the Custom House, where we underwent a severe examination, and paid thirteen florins, duties for mere trifles." Yet when the visitor had time to recover his equanimity and look around, he usually became as exclamatory about the height of the buildings as the modern traveller in sight of the sky-scrapers of New York. Indeed, a German tourist almost anticipates the American definition. "On every side," he says, "are houses as lofty as towers, for the space which the earth denies to the builders is borrowed from the skies." But by far the most graphic description of eighteenth-century Vienna is that of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu. "This town," she writes, "which has the honour of being the Emperor's residence, did not at all answer to my ideas of it, being much less than I expected to find it. The streets are very close, and so narrow one cannot observe the fine fronts of the palaces, though many of them very well deserve observation, being truly magnificent, all built of fine white stone, and excessive high. The town being so much too little for the number of the people that desire to live in it, the builders seem to have projected to repair that misfortune by clapping one town on the top of another, most of the houses being of five, and some of them of six stories. You may easily imagine that the streets being so narrow, the upper rooms are extremely dark.[2] And what is an inconveniency much more intolerable, in my opinion, there is no house that has so few as five or six families in it. The apartments of the greatest ladies are divided but by a partition from that of a tailor or a shoemaker, and I know nobody who has above two floors in any house, one for their own use, and one higher for their servants. Those that have houses of their own let out the rest of them to whoever will take them. Thus the great stairs, which are all of stone, are as common and dirty as the street. 'Tis true, when you have once travelled through them, nothing can be more surprisingly magnificent than the apartments. They are commonly a suite of eight or ten large rooms, all inlaid, the doors and windows richly carved and gilt, and the furniture such as is seldom seen in the palaces of sovereign princes in other countries."

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[1] Sir Henry Swinburne, *Memoirs of the Courts of Europe.*

[2] The projecting roofs were also responsible for the exclusion of light.

As for the tailor and the shoemaker, they would doubtless have been overjoyed to escape from the necessity of pursuing their avocations in private houses. But they were handicapped by the extreme difficulty of securing proper business premises in a city crowded into a three-mile circuit; one, moreover, where those who held any position at Court had to be suitably lodged before the claims of other would-be residents were considered. Out of the limited number of ordinary dwelling-places for which space could be found, no fewer than eighty were retained by the Sovereign for the benefit of Court functionaries. So numerous were they in the reign of Charles VI that even this generous provision proved insufficient. Thenceforward many houses could be obtained on lease only on condition that particular suites of apartments were reserved for the benefit of Imperial nominees. It was an irksome and unpopular regulation, leading to the shameless overcrowding of unprivileged citizens, and to abnormally high rents. It is not surprising that "few of the common people lived in the city." They departed at nightfall and reappeared at the city gates in the morning—a motley horde of servants, tradesfolk, labourers, beggars. Those who in other places would have ranked as small shopkeepers, were lucky if they could display their wares in some shelterless open space. No market could make up for the scarcity of shops. The provisioning of the city seems to have been almost entirely in the hands of hawkers. They were a hard-working, quick-witted, impudent, clamorous crew, who could tickle the ears of the populace amidst all the din of the streets. Every city was noisy when springless vehicles rattled over cobble-stones, and success in trade was largely a matter of lung power. But even the seasoned traveller avowed that he had heard nothing to equal the tumult of

Vienna. There were few streets in which carriages could pass, and without a war of words no charioteer would give way to another. As for the foot-passengers, it was a case of every man for himself, or a bath in the gutter. One lively tourist suggested that half the population should be killed off, or else allowed to promenade on the heads of the other half.

When the stranger in Vienna could pause and watch the passers-by he was invariably impressed by the composition of the throng. "The streets," says Sir Nicholas Wraxall, "are crowded with people of various nations. I constantly meet Hungarians, Greeks, Turks, and Poles, all habited in the peculiar dress of their respective countries. Nothing is more picturesque and amusing than such a diversity, which rarely occurs in London or Paris."[1]

Considering the general deficiency of light and ventilation, it is not astonishing that strangers also noted the pallid, unhealthy look of constant residents in Vienna. Their outings to church and market ensured no breathing of fresh air, and an occasional saunter on the city wall could hardly count as exercise. The energetic Wraxall, who assured everybody that less than fifty minutes sufficed for a walk right round the city, was doubtless regarded by the Viennese as an eccentric and tiresome foreigner.

The Emperor's influence over other nations had long been a thing of the past, but the spirit of cosmopolitanism lingered on in the Imperial capital. "It is not in Vienna as with us," says Wraxall, "where a native of France or Germany, however well-born and accomplished, may pass many winters in vain endeavours to force himself into the society of the great. He is not driven here, as in London and Paris, to the theatres and public places of diversion for a refuge from dulness. The common rallying-point of pleasure and relaxation is here found in the highest circles, to which he is immediately carried." That is to say, after being duly vouched for by the Ambassador of his country. The sociability of Maria Theresa was emulated by her chief Ministers. They, too, held receptions on certain evenings of the week, and strangers who had been introduced to them were welcome to be present as often as they pleased.

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[1] Wraxall, *Memoirs of the Court of Vienna.*

Vienna therefore only needed time to bring the properly accredited traveller under her spell. He might enter her gates with words of disappointment on his lips, but once within her charmed circle he was conscious of no exaggeration when he caught the refrain of the popular ballad, *'S gibt nur a Kaiserstadt, 'S gibt nur a Wean.*[1]

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[1] There's only one Imperial city, only one Vienna.

CHAPTER XIX

THE EDUCATIONAL REFORMS OF MARIA THERESA AND VAN SWIETEN

UNLIKE her father and grandfather, Maria Theresa had no purely æsthetic pleasure in the erection of stately buildings. For the beautifying of Schönbrunn her husband and Kaunitz deserve more credit than herself. The original shooting-lodge had been destroyed by the Turks in 1683. Leopold I replaced it by a more imposing edifice, which became the chosen residence of his son Joseph. Because it afforded facilities for shooting game and comparative freedom from the ceremoniousness of Vienna, Francis I loved Schönbrunn with a passionate affection. To the Empress its chief attraction was the garden, wherein was the "beautiful spring," for which the place was named. There in the long summer days she did most of her work. A sentry at the end of the path guarded her privacy. Otherwise the public came and went as they liked. As for the residence she would have been content to make haphazard additions to meet the growing needs of her family. It was Francis who insisted that the extensions should be carried out with some regard to symmetry.

The buildings with which Maria Theresa is peculiarly identified are neither churches nor palaces, but centres of political, educational, and charitable enterprise. The shadow of her personality is clearly to be discerned in the University of Vienna and its far-famed medical school.

Of all her friendships, none was more bracing or more potent in its results than her friendship with Van Swieten. It began before he set foot in Austria, and went on deepening to the end of his life, more than a quarter of a century afterwards. Their mutual respect and admiration was unbounded. Neither apparently ever failed to rise to the level of the other's expectation. The young ruler who appointed Count Silva-Tarouca to criticize her unsparingly in her public capacity, stipulated also with Van Swieten for the truth at all times and rejoiced to be taken at her word. She had induced him to enter her service by a pledge of support against possible enemies. No promise was ever more faithfully kept. Like other drastic reformers he was never without opponents of the malevolent type, but they were generally forced to admit in the long run that it was futile to cabal against him.

On his first coming to Vienna he was established in the threefold capacity of Physician-in-Ordinary to the Imperial household, professor of certain branches of medical science, and Prefect of the Imperial Library.

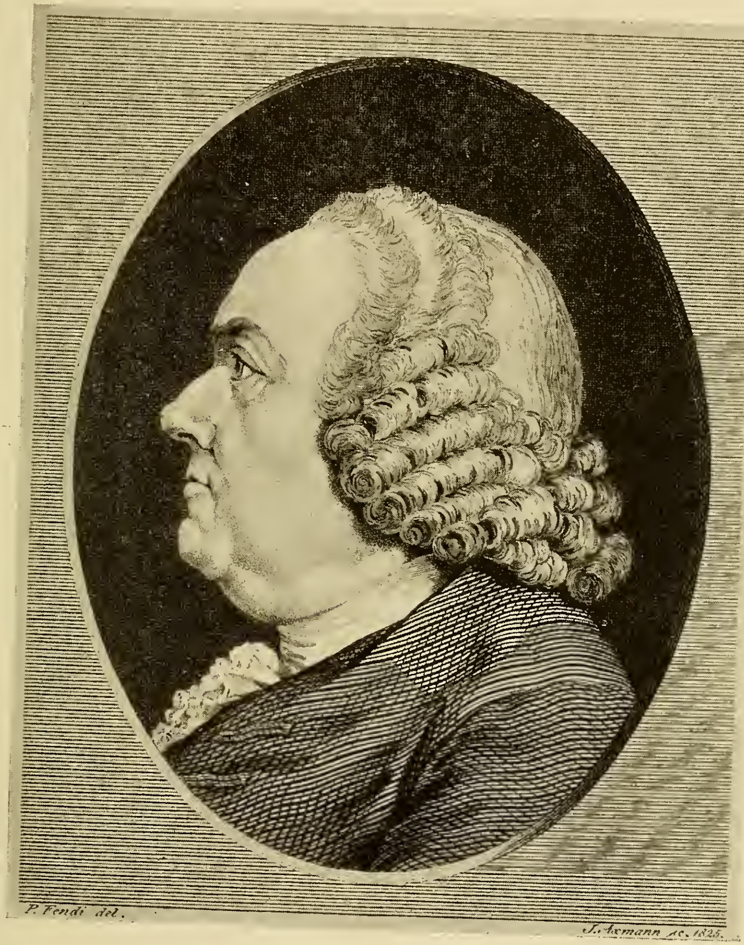
His popularity as a lecturer roused a perfect storm of jealous resentment, not only in the Medical Faculty but throughout the University. For generations every department of learning had been in the control of the Jesuits. They had concentrated their efforts on the teaching of law and theology. Foreseeing that the scientific study of philosophy and medicine might beget a spirit irreconcilable with submission to authority, both departments had been systematically neglected. France, England, and Holland had progressive medical schools. Petty German states had colleges where natural science was efficiently taught; but the University in the capital of the Empire lagged hopelessly behind.

To Van Swieten, fresh from the flourishing University of Leyden, the stagnation at Vienna was manifest from the outset. So also was the spirit of antagonism with which his own work was regarded. When he had been four years in Austria, the pent-up fury of his colleagues broke loose. But by levelling accusations against him they were simply playing into his hand. For the outburst led Maria Theresa to inquire, with a minuteness she might not otherwise have deemed necessary, into the whole system of teaching at the University. She pronounced it to be "full of errors and of little practical use." As a first step towards improvement Van Swieten was nominated perpetual President of the Medical Faculty and given the congenial task of drawing up a plan for its reconstruction. His proposals were an elaboration of principles for which, as a scholastic reformer, he never ceased to contend: that is to say, transference to the Crown of the authority in secular education hitherto claimed by the Jesuits; consideration of merit, and not influence, in making appointments to the teaching staff, and due correlation of theoretical and practical instruction.

The extent of Maria Theresa's confidence in her chosen man of science is evident when she sanctioned all his proposals. For though calculated in the main to appeal to a benevolent despot, who detested ineptitude as heartily as Van Swieten himself, there was a revolutionary flavour about the whole scheme. But she hesitated when he went on to suggest making a clean sweep of the existing medical staff, with a view to the immediate realization of his ideal. She granted that little good was being accomplished, but summary dismissal seemed to need the justification of absolute wrongdoing. Van Swieten had to convince her that she could not tolerate the prevailing condition of things a day longer than necessary without conniving at wholesale murder. He succeeded by calling her attention to the fact that out of six hundred children admitted to the Municipal Hospital, only about twenty had left the place alive. She made no further resistance to his final proposal, and he presently found himself with a free field and a free hand for its cultivation.

For a time he appears to have gone about the work almost single-handed. He was hampered by want of space, and had to use the vestibule of the Imperial Library as a class-room. For lack of text-books, he had to dictate the first principles of science to his pupils. He lectured on physiology, anatomy, pathology, and pharmacy. His own anatomical collection was put at the service of the students, and doubtless he had their needs primarily in view when he made a properly appointed reading-room a feature of the Imperial Library.

Van Swieten also contrived to do away with the most crying abuses in the Municipal Hospital, and made it available for practical teaching. Inability to fit this branch of


P. Fendi del.
J. Axmann sc. 1825.

GERARD VAN SWIETEN
AFTER THE PORTRAIT BY P. FENDI

instruction into his overcrowded days led to the most noteworthy of all the appointments which he was instrumental in bringing about, namely, that of the man who ranks next to himself as a founder of the medical school of Vienna—Antony de Haen.

De Haen was a friend, fellow-townsman, and co-religionist of Van Swieten's. They had sat together at the feet of Boerhaave, and had been fired by the same enthusiasm for their master's method of discovering truth by following nature. Neither had ever grown weary of the pursuit. De Haen had combined original research with an extensive practice in The Hague. He was pre-eminently fitted for the post of clinical teacher. His methods were for the most part so far in advance of his own day as to seem like a revelation to the pupils who flocked to him. In the importance he attributed to the pulse, temperature, and diet of his patients, he was entirely modern, as also in his condemnation of overheated rooms and piles of bed-clothes. He was one of the first, if not the very first, to advocate the use of small portable clinical thermometers.

In his inaugural address, De Haen declared his readiness to "dedicate, devote and sacrifice himself" to his students. Twenty strenuous years demonstrated the genuineness of this profession. For an irritable man he was wonderfully patient with the pupils, who looked up to him. But he could not brook the slightest contradiction from other scientists. While Van Swieten, following Boerhaave, had grave doubts of the harmlessness and effectiveness of preventive inoculation, De Haen thundered against it as a deadly evil. Not a few of his denunciatory pamphlets were directed against its advocates. Thus at a time when Maria Theresa's correspondence proves her interest in the new method of evading confluent smallpox, and when Van Swieten with his openness to conviction might have been led to reconsider the subject, they had at their elbow a scientist of European renown, an acknowledged authority on febrile diseases, who proclaimed in season and out of season the dangers of inoculation.

In order to make Vienna a centre of attraction to the wise and learned of other countries, Van Swieten had stipulated for acknowledged rank and a considerable augmentation of salary for University professors. From Holland came not only De Haen, but Nicholas Jacquin, an illustrious occupant of the chair of chemistry and botany. It had been founded in response to the representations of Van Swieten, seconded by those of the Emperor, who was interested in these particular branches of medical lore. At his own charges, Francis sent Jacquin to the West Indies to study the flora of the tropics, and to collect rare plants for the Imperial gardens and the Botanical Garden. The latter had been a private, suburban pleasure-ground till Maria Theresa was persuaded by her energetic physician to purchase it for scientific purposes and to establish Jacquin as curator.

Both the Empress and her fellow-reformer were eager for the day when it should no longer be necessary to look abroad for the right man to fill a vacant post. In process of time Van Swieten discovered that certain of his pupils only needed insight into the methods of specialists in order to qualify them for tutorial rank. More than one talented youth, who could not afford to complete his education at a foreign medical school, was helped on his way either by the Empress or by the generosity of Van Swieten himself. Thus the latter was enabled to depute to men familiar with his own methods, the scientific instruction of the students, while he continued to lecture on the Institutes of Boerhaave and to make his influence felt in every branch of the work.

This lightening of his labours as a professor was rendered necessary by the demands that were being made upon him as an administrator. He had given Maria Theresa some idea of the suffering that was due to unskilled treatment of disease, and she could not rest until he had undertaken to initiate reforms in every medical centre in the country. Moreover, his success in vivifying one department of collegiate teaching had led to his being entrusted with the reorganization of the University as a whole. The Empress declared it to be her ambition that no seat of learning in Europe should surpass Vienna in the excellence of its legal instruction. The professorships of law were henceforward to be reserved for men who had already made their mark, either as jurists or lecturers at some other university, and who had also given proof of ability by their writings.

As the School of Law was the school of statesmen and civil servants, Maria Theresa was filled with hope for the future, when students from every part of her dominions as well as from abroad were drawn to her capital by the fame of Paul Riegger, the professor of canon law, of Martini, who lectured on natural and Roman law, and of the brilliant Sonnenfels, the exponent of economics and commercial law.

The installation of these eminent laymen was a more direct encroachment on the preserves of the Jesuits than their exclusion from the medical department. It was followed up by decrees which definitely deprived the Rector of their College of his assumed right to an ex officio seat on the Council of the University, and made Jesuits ineligible for the position of dean of any faculty or examiner in any subject.

Needless to say the Dutch reformer was assailed with more virulence than ever. Fortunately for him, his anti-Jesuitical measures could never be described as anti-clerical. In his earlier reforms he was ably seconded by Trautson, the liberal-minded Archbishop of Vienna. Fortunately also his opponents were incapable of perceiving that Maria Theresa's logical mind was alienated by railing accusations, whereas she was susceptible to the influence of facts and statistics. Because Van Swieten never railed and never disguised the truth, he was able to curtail the power of the Jesuits, through the power of a monarch who had been their pupil from infancy, who still had a Jesuit confessor and a natural predilection for the disciples of Loyola.

No prompting was needed in order to convince Maria Theresa of the necessity of providing suitable accommodation for distinguished professors with troops of students. She herself made the first move in 1752, when she proposed that Haugwitz should consult Archbishop Trautson and Van Swieten with regard to general requirements. In the following year the Empress purchased several houses beyond the city wall, but facing the fortifications, in order to provide a site for the new University. The class-rooms were to be of ample size, and the theatre for anatomical and surgical demonstrations allowed for the presence of two hundred students. An impressive exterior was designed for the national seat of learning. The University of Vienna, with its palatial façade, is the representative building of the reign of Maria Theresa. She had undertaken to open it in person in the autumn of 1755, but the impending birth of her daughter Marie Antoinette led to the postponement of the ceremony till the spring of 1756. Nothing was then omitted in order to do honour to the occasion. The Emperor and Empress proceeded in state to the new centre of intellectual life. They were accompanied by Archduke Joseph and their two elder daughters. The impressive proceedings ended with the distribution of a thousand ducats amongst the poorer students.

Although reform had begun at the top of the educational ladder, it was not intended that any grade should be overlooked. In the schooling of her people, as in the schooling of her children, Maria Theresa had an eye to utilitarian objects. "Intelligent obedience in the subject, well-ordered industry in the producer, education and training in the governing classes were necessary conditions of success in the development of the new system, and were inconsistent with the prevalent laxity of morals, rough manners, gross ignorance and superstition. The improvement of education emanating like the rest of the system from a central authority received therefore much attention. Though the primary schools were not reorganized till somewhat later, steps in the right direction were taken, and a well-arranged and stringent system of examinations breathed new life into the secondary schools or gymnasia."[1]

Frederick the Great's eulogy of Maria Theresa's reforms makes special mention of "the establishment of a military academy in Vienna." It was not, however, in the city, but in Wiener-Neustadt, thirty miles off, that the Sandhurst of Austria was established in 1752. Finding no means of raising funds for a new structure, the Empress lodged her budding warriors in an ancient, Imperial castle. She had already devoted to the education of future statesmen and civil servants a palace within the lines of fortification, which her father had preferred to Schönbrunn as a summer resort. It had been known as the Favorita. On its transformation into a public school its name was changed. Thenceforward it was the Theresianum. Of both these institutions the Empress-Queen was a munificent patroness. She made efforts to attend their public examinations and to show her interest on every possible occasion. The Theresianum came to be related to the Hofburg in much the same way as Eton is related to Windsor.

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[1] Bright, *Maria Theresa*, p. 76.

The military academy was placed under the superintendence of Count Leopold Daun, son-in-law of Countess Fuchs, who proved to be the right man in the right place. Jesuit schoolmasters were responsible for the general instruction of the pupils of both schools, but the distinctive objects were gained by the teaching of specialists. Somewhat similar lines were followed in a third school which owed its foundation to Maria Theresa. This was the Oriental Academy, or training ground for diplomatists. Its Orient was the near East, and pupils were specially required to familiarize themselves with the language and institutions of Turkey.

Educational reform involved consideration of the subject of text-books. The arbitrary censorship of literature by the Jesuits brought them into conflict with Van Swieten, as Prefect of the Imperial Library. It was probably at his instigation that in 1749 Haugwitz persuaded the Empress that more satisfactory results would be obtained if publications were classified and submitted to various censors. Then the Jesuits might still give a verdict on theological and philosophical works, while Van Swieten decided the fate of books bearing on medical science, and the Faculty of Law that of legal publications and perhaps also of those which were classified as history and general literature.

Consulted by Maria Theresa, the Prefect of the Library declared his reluctance to leave even the theological books to the mercy of the Jesuits. These publications might, he suggested, be submitted to the Archbishop. As for the philosophical works, he proposed to take them in hand himself as well as the medical literature. The Empress conceded the latter point, but she could not see her way to dissociate the Jesuits from the Censorship Commission. A representative of their Order was to be attached to each of its divisions.

But Van Swieten gained his object in the end by a royal decree that when any one of these Jesuits retired, his place was not to be taken by another.

It cannot be argued that a reign of tolerance began when, a year or two later, Van Swieten himself became President of the Commission. Von Arneth hazards a guess that in waging war on such writers as Voltaire, Rousseau, Machiavelli, or Fielding, the trend of whose works was generally known, he was seeking cover for the circulation of the scientific and philosophical treatises which were anathema to the Jesuits.

There is an amusing correspondence between the Empress and her doctor about an unnamed Bavarian periodical. It contained humorous sketches of various types of society, and Van Swieten adjudged it harmless. Not so Maria Theresa. " For my part," she says, " I dislike everything that goes by the name of irony, and consider it incompatible with love of our neighbour. Why should any one waste time in reading or writing such things? Our language does not lend itself to this kind of light jesting. The proximity of Bavaria is quite enough to make me suspicious. Under the cloak of tales from Bavaria, attempts might easily be made to ridicule the people of this country, and that I would never tolerate."

That Van Swieten was not singular in his dislike of Jesuit methods is evident from the complete suppression of the Society within twenty years of the opening of the new University of Vienna. But here and there it still produced men worthy of its great missionary and scholastic tradition. Both elements were represented by Father Ignatius Parhamer, who, about 1750, became Director of the chief Orphan Asylum in Vienna. No easy task awaited him, for his predecessor had been faithless to his charge. Rumours of neglect and ill-treatment of the orphans reached the ears of the Mother of the people, and she appointed a commission of inquiry. The report told of three hundred boys huddled together in unspeakable conditions and with no teaching worth mentioning. Maria Theresa's wrath was fully justified, inasmuch as the Director had not been short of funds. She shrank from inflicting public disgrace on a dignitary of the church, so he was left with a seat on the Council, but superseded in all responsibility by the Jesuit Father whose preaching tours had made his name a household word in every province of Austria. He had a special gift of adapting his teaching to children, and under his genial administration a new life began for the hapless boys. He found them enfeebled in body and cowed in spirit, but he had already discovered that both boys and girls took kindly to a mixture of physical and spiritual drill. The orphans were mainly sons of soldiers, so they responded the more readily when the new Director formed them into regiments and put them through military exercises. Uniforms were procured and weapons of sorts. Music was encouraged and the company had its own band. At stated seasons Parhamer's full-fledged boys' brigade, with drums beating and flags flying, was marched to Schönbrunn to be reviewed by the delighted Empress. At the age of sixteen the lads were given their choice of entering the army or learning a trade.

CHAPTER XX

MUSIC AND MORALS

IN Schiller's ballad, *Der Graf von Hapsburg*, Rudolf I asserts that the joy of his coronation feast would be incomplete if no minstrel were present to hymn the event. The love of melody was inherited by his descendants. As the handmaid of religion, music was never in any danger of being overlooked by the instructors of German youth. Luther made it an essential feature of the reformed Church. And "in all the towns throughout the Empire," writes Dr. Burney,[1] "where the Jesuits have a church or a college, young persons are taught to play upon musical instruments and to sing." As he sailed down the Danube to Vienna this historian of music remarked that "the soldiers and almost all the young people who were walking by the waterside were frequently singing, and never in less than two parts."[2] In an epoch when Jesuit teachers ignored the branches of learning most likely to stimulate independent thought, their pupils, Imperial and otherwise, devoted themselves with all the more zest to the one form of culture they were trained to appreciate. Both Leopold I and Charles VI had a thorough knowledge of theoretical and practical music. Both composed and both were skilled performers—Leopold on the violoncello and his son on the harpsichord.

"The sacred music of the period was indigenous, and made to conform to types that had their source within Germany itself, but in all forms of secular music, whether in the opera or in instrumental work, the patterns were set by the Italians."[3] The emperors from Ferdinand II to

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[1] The father of Fanny Burney.

[2] *The Present State of Music in Germany*, published in 1773.

[3] J. A. Fuller Maitland, *The Age of Bach and Handel* (Oxford History of Music).

Charles VI showed a marked preference for Italian words and music. At the same time this partiality did not, as in England, lead to the underrating of native talent. Wagenseil, a German and Maria Theresa's instructor in instrumental music, was esteemed as a composer for the harpsichord. When the Italian, Caldara, settled in Vienna, at the invitation of Charles VI, he was only appointed assistant-chapelmaster. The chapelmaster was Fux, author of that famous treatise on counterpoint, *Gradus ad Parnassum*. But whatever the nationality of the musicians, the operas, odes, and dramatic poems, which the Court composers set to music, were all written in Italian by such poets as Conti, Zeno and, after 1730, by the illustrious Metastasio.

Zeno was the librettist and Caldara the composer of the opera, *Eurystheus*, which, in 1724, celebrated in the inner circle of the Court the birth of Charles VI's third, short-lived daughter, Maria Amelia. "It was exhibited with uncommon magnificence and splendour. The performers were all persons of high rank, and His Imperial Majesty himself accompanied the voices on the harpsichord, as principal director. . . . The Archduchess Maria Theresa sung the principal part on the stage in this drama."[1] Though only seven years old, she had begun to study with Caldara. Half a century afterwards when the renowned vocalist, Faustina Bordogni,[2] claimed to be the first or oldest virtuosa in Europe, the Empress laughingly replied that she herself had a better title to be so described, for her father had brought her on the Court stage at Vienna when she was only five, and made her sing a song.

A letter written by Metastasio gives a delightful glimpse of Maria Theresa and her sister, aged respectively eighteen and seventeen, rehearsing an ode in dramatic form for their mother's birthday. "I should not have believed it possible," says the poet who was coaching the princesses, "to meet with such attention, docility, patience, and gratitude. They have acted and sung like angels, and it was truly sacrilege that the whole world was not permitted to admire them, for the festival was extremely private." With characteristic thoughtfulness Maria Theresa insisted that the laureate should be seated during the lengthy instructions.

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[1] Burney, *A General History of Music.*

[2] The wife of Hasse, the composer.

As Queen of Hungary, she had little time for the exercise of her musical gifts. After she became Empress, she virtually ceased to take part in stage performances, though she did not altogether neglect her singing. Listening to music was always a delight to her. "If the Queen has any pleasure in life," said Sir Thomas Robinson, "it is in music. She certainly fatigues her mind enough for the public, to deserve this simple means of relaxation." Not only the Empress, but the whole Imperial Family was musical. The Emperor's long association with the Austrian Court had made him also something of an expert, and he could enter fully into his wife's enjoyment of the art in which she was so proficient. She gave particular attention to the musical education of her children. Names as eminent as that of Gluck appear upon their list of teachers. The pupils were delightfully responsive. Like their mother they were early accustomed to take part in concerted music and operettas. Metastasio was still the poet-laureate. When commissioned to furnish a libretto for any particular celebration, he had the facility of sitting down and reeling it off, "just as he would transcribe a poem written by any one else." His sole perplexity was to find suitable subjects. Classical legend presented difficulties when parts were to be taken by Archduchesses "who were not allowed to exhibit their chaste limbs." Four of them appeared in the opera of *Egeria*, which was set to music by Hasse. "A person of great distinction, who had been present, told me," says Dr. Burney, "that they were extremely beautiful, sung and acted very well for princesses, and the Archduke Leopold danced in the character of Cupid." The older members of the Imperial Family could always be depended upon for instrumental quartets. Joseph played the 'cello, Charles the violin, their sisters Marianne and Marie the clavier. Joseph was the most musical member of the group. He performed very well himself, and "he had sufficient taste and judgment to hear, understand, and receive delight from others."

On these festive occasions Court etiquette generally restricted the audience to "persons of very great distinction." But the line between them and mortals of lesser rank was not drawn with the same rigour as in the days of Charles VI. Though Maria Theresa's chief intercourse was with the old patrician families, she never felt tied down to their society, nor did she reserve for them her friendship. Any one who had rendered conspicuous service to herself or to the State might receive an invitation to be present at some performance primarily intended for the exclusive circle. Thus to Councillor von Doblhoff, an eminent civil servant, the Empress addressed the following friendly little message: "If you would like to see the comedy in which my children are dancing, come to my ante-room in the Burg at five o'clock."

The music of her youth was always the music of Maria Theresa's choice. Towards the end of her reign she writes to an Italian correspondent: "I was touched by what you say of Reutter's requiem. It is my own favourite amongst his compositions. . . . As for dramatic music, I confess that I would rather have the slightest Italian thing than all the works of our composers, Gaisman, Gluck, and others. For instrumental music we have a certain Haydn who has good ideas, but he is just beginning to be known."

This is faint praise for the men who linked the Theresian epoch to the Golden Age of music. Christopher Wilibald Gluck (1714–87), the great reformer of dramatico-musical art, was the son of a forester employed on the Bohemian estate of Prince Lobkowitz. A childhood spent in close contact with wild nature was followed by education at the nearest gymnasium. Gluck's schooling resulted in familiarity with classical myths, and considerable knowledge of singing and playing on the violin and 'cello. Like other great nobles, Lobkowitz had his private company of picked musicians. In the train of the Prince, the forester's son arrived in Vienna, where he came under the spell of Fux and Caldara. He had the good fortune to attract the interest of a Lombard dignitary, Prince Melzi, who fulfilled the young musician's most fervent desire by taking him to Italy and giving him opportunities of studying the accepted methods of composition. Gluck was twenty-seven when he scored a first success at Milan with his opera, *Artaxerxes.* Of this and other works of his first period the most that can be said is that they were good of their kind. He had taken as his model the operas of Porpora, Hasse, and Caldara, whose chief aim was to exhibit the dexterity of popular singers, generally their own pupils. Thus the opera had degenerated into "a mere string of arias connected by recitative, with an occasional duet and a chorus to bring down the curtain at the end of the work. Only the man was needed who should sweep the mass of insincerity from the stage and replace it by a purer ideal."[1] Twenty years after the first performance of *Artaxerxes*, the production of Gluck's *Orpheus and Eurydice* at the Court theatre of Vienna announced the arrival of the reformer.

By slow degrees he realized the task that had been committed to him. The fame achieved in Italy brought him an invitation to England. But London under the domination of Handel had no enthusiasm for Gluck. We hear of him in Hamburg and in Dresden before his return to Vienna in 1748, the year of the proclamation of peace and the adoption of the Ten Years Recess, with all its possibilities of better government. Fux and Caldara were dead, and Gluck was presently numbered amongst the composers by whom Metastasio's dramatic poetry was set to music. It was the position he had dreamed of in his youth, but he was no longer satisfied to proceed on the old lines. The spirit of reform was in the air; and both his love of what was natural and his love of art rebelled against the vicious system of making music subordinate to the glorification of operatic "stars." In *Orpheus and Eurydice* (1762) and *Alceste* (1767) he made his first strong protest, and gave his first illustrations of a more excellent way. His later triumphs were achieved in Paris, but he eventually returned to Austria. "I had the good fortune," writes Dr. Burney from Vienna, "to meet with the Chevalier Gluck, one of the most extraordinary geniuses of this or perhaps of any age or nation." He was certainly "the first composer who treated the opera as an integral whole, the first to make the overture in some sort a reflection of the drama which it preceded, and he used orchestral effects as a means of expressing the passion of his characters in

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[1] R. A. Streatfeild, *The Opera.*

GLUCK

FROM THE PORTRAIT BY F. S. DUPLESSIS

a way that had not been dreamed of before. His banishment of recitative arias, and his restoration of the chorus to its proper place in the drama were innovations of vast importance to the history of opera, but the chief strength of the influence which he exerted upon subsequent music lay in his power of suffusing each of his operas in an atmosphere special to itself."[1]

Reutter, the composer of the requiem commended by Maria Theresa, succeeded Fux as Imperial Chapelmaster. He was also choirmaster of St. Stephen's Cathedral. Amongst his pupils was Joseph Haydn (1732–1809), "commonly styled the father of the symphony," though no form of composition was without attraction for him. It is difficult to realize that works so numerous, so varied, and so uniformly excellent as those of Haydn were the product of a single lifetime.

During a visit to the Hungarian Prince Esterhazy, in 1773, Maria Theresa took occasion to say a word of praise to Haydn, who had composed the music of the opera given in her honour, and conducted the performance. She expressed a conviction of having seen him before, without being able to recall the circumstances. "The last time Your Majesty was pleased to take notice of me," said Haydn, "you ordered me a good thrashing." "That does not sound like me," rejoined the Empress. "How did it happen?" Then Haydn told of a Whitsuntide when, with other pupils of Reutter, he had been brought to Schönbrunn to sing in the chapel. Between the services the boys took to clambering over the scaffolding of the new wings of the palace. The Empress caught sight of them, and sent to forbid the dangerous sport. But the attraction of the scaffolding was irresistible. On the following day the choir boys were again risking their necks. When Maria Theresa expostulated with Reutter, his surmise that the ringleader was "that young scamp Joseph Haydn," led to the suggestion of the rod as an incentive to memory.

In the days of the Empress-Queen, Vienna could only boast of two play-houses. The Burg, or Court, theatre served indifferently for the production of operas and French plays. German plays could be witnessed in the National Theatre. Neither house of entertainment could be described as popular. According to Dr. Burney, "the diversions of the common people were such as seem hardly fit for a civilized and polished nation to allow: particularly the *combats*, as they are called, or baiting of wild beasts." He proceeds to translate a handbill such as was distributed through the streets every Sunday and festival.

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[1] Streatfeild, *The Opera.*

"This day, by Imperial licence, in the great amphitheatre at five o'clock will begin the following diversions: First, a wild Hungarian Ox, in full fire, i.e. with fire under his tail and crackers fastened to his ears, horns, and other parts of his body, will be set upon by dogs!" Then after an orgy of cruelty to animals—dogs, boars, and wolves—the handbill finally promises that "a furious and hungry bear, which has had no food for eight days, will attack a young wild bull and eat him up alive on the spot. If he is unable to complete the business, a wolf will be ready to help him!"

Without substituting other forms of entertainment it would scarcely have been politic to deprive the populace of their accustomed pleasures, however revolting. But the reign of Maria Theresa was a gradual preparation for better things. Her interpretation of benevolent despotism included not only measures for the increase of material well-being, but a strong endeavour to raise the whole standard of national life. To her it would have seemed reprehensible in the extreme to accept the title of Mother of the people without its implication of responsibility. She was profoundly grateful to the members of her larger family for the way in which they had stood by her in the past. She foresaw that their loyalty and endurance would be put to further proof in days to come, and it grieved her profoundly that those who held the future in the hollow of their hands were for the most part in pitiful circumstances—victims of ignorance and superstition, of poverty and vice. Her generous support of education, and of institutions for the relief of the sick, by no means exhausted her efforts to check the evils which were sapping the vitality of her subjects.

The social reforms which she instituted in Vienna constituted the basis of the system of Poor Law administration introduced in the reign of her successor. "Ruthless she might be in her dealings with the rich, but Maria Theresa was always merciful towards the poor. Even in the midst of her struggle for her crown, she found time to busy herself with their concerns, for she held, as the ordinances she issued prove clearly, strong views as to the way they ought to be treated, views well in advance, not only of her own day, but in some respects of ours. For instance, when she became Queen, it was the custom in Vienna to lodge the poor whom the town supported all together in the Spitals, no matter whether they were old or young, feeble or strong, keen-witted, half-witted or with no wits at all. This arrangement she pronounced scandalous, and declared it must be altered. Children must not be allowed to live in the same house as worthless persons lest, perverted by their evil example, they should fall into lazy, disreputable ways. She called upon the authorities to remove into orphanages all the boys and girls who were in the Spitals. She called upon them also to remove all the idiots and insane persons who were there, lest they should cause discomfort to the sick. What is more notable still, she insisted that the more worthy should be lodged quite apart from the less worthy; and that specially good care should be taken of such of them as were old."[1]

While seeing that the municipal authorities did their duty, she never relaxed her own efforts to relieve the individual cases of distress that came under her notice. Her unstinted charity and kindly helpfulness gave rise to stories of apocryphal character. Some of them indicate that she was looked upon as a sort of visible Madonna—a strong, purposeful, golden-haired Madonna, like that of Holbein,[2] who could take a sick child into her arms and miraculously restore it to health.

Maria Theresa's attempts to deal with the problems of ignorance and poverty represent the nobler aspect of benevolent despotism. Its drawbacks find ample illustration in her methods of counteracting moral impurity. As a social reformer she felt bound to take cognizance of a matter affecting so profoundly the welfare of the community. In the country at large she realized that the prevalent coarseness of speech and grossness of conduct could only be gradually overcome; but she never questioned her own ability to cleanse the Augean stables of Vienna.

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[1] Edith Sellers, *Foreign Solutions of Poor Law Problems.*

[2] The Madonna of the Meyer family at Darmstadt.

That she did not exaggerate their foulness is evident from the many witnesses who corroborate the outspoken statements of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu. Lady Mary also indicates some of the predisposing causes—overcrowding, lack of elevating interests, and the influence of Oriental customs. For generations these factors of immorality had been at work. We may pass over the assertion of Æneas Sylvius in the fifteenth century that Vienna deserved the fate of Sodom and Gomorrah; for the future pope never forgave the Austrian Court and capital their failure to accept him at his own valuation. But it is clear that in the age of Shakespeare Vienna was notorious for moral obliquity. When the play scene in *Hamlet* agitates the guilty king, his stepson assures him that it is but "the image of a murther done in Vienna." Again, in the drama by Whetstone which served as the foundation of *Measure for Measure*, the scene is laid vaguely in Hungary. Shakespeare, however, places it definitely in Vienna.

Of Maria Theresa, with her love of decorum and possession of autocratic power, it might have been foretold that she would fall into the error of the fictitious governor of Vienna and seek to amend the morals of the citizens by outward repression. Not that she underrated the value of personal influence. To the daughter who became Queen of Naples she wrote: "It is our duty to remember that a word in season or a grave look will silence those who indulge in unlicensed speech, and have an excellent general effect." It certainly made for restraint when it was understood that moral lapses were an insuperable bar to the favour of the Empress. As her husband did not see eye to eye with her on this subject, she chose to regard him as a personage to whom ordinary rules did not apply. Other members of her environment had to take heed to their ways if they desired to retain any position at Court.

But it was not the salutary effect of Maria Theresa's personal example that caused her contemporaries to occupy themselves so extensively with her crusade against social impurity. It was the report that she had founded an inquisitorial tribunal known as the Chastity Commission.

Considering the number of writers who have described, denounced, or ridiculed the peculiar institution, it was naturally expected that the Austrian archives would furnish full particulars of its origin and functions. But prolonged research has yielded only a single authoritative reference,[1] showing it to have been a temporary adjunct to the police department of Lower Austria. Even in her letters to the heads of this department Maria Theresa seldom touches on the question of public morals, though there can be no doubt that if she did not instigate she was in full sympathy with the forcible suppression of vice and the deportation of transgressors of the new regulations, with all the attendant prying and spying.

It is significant that Frederick of Prussia is frequently quoted as the authority for details concerning the Empress-Queen's "College of Chastity." Personalities were the order of the day. And since his opponent's character showed no other opening for scandalous innuendo, it was always possible to pounce on her reputation as a martinet. At its best her attitude was alleged to be due to jealousy of her husband, at its worst to a weakness for salacious gossip. Time disproved both accusations.

Without any attribution of unworthy motives it must be admitted that her zeal for morality was often indistinguishable from officiousness and unwarrantable interference with the liberty of the subject. But it is one thing to say that she would have done infinitely more good by simply trusting to the force of her example, and quite another thing to say she did no good at all. Over against Lady Mary's picture of Vienna, in the reign of her predecessor, we can place the description of Dr. John Moore, towards the end of her own reign. "I can imagine," he says, "no city in Europe where a young gentleman would see fewer examples, or have fewer opportunities of deep gaming, open profligacy, or gross debauchery than in Vienna." This is a great testimony to the uplifting influence of the Empress-Queen.

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[1] Von Arneth, Vol. IX, p. 399.

CHAPTER XXI

MARIA THERESA AND KAUNITZ—THE PROPOSED ALLIANCE BETWEEN AUSTRIA AND FRANCE

"MY enemies will give me better conditions of peace than my friends," was Maria Theresa's significant remark during a stormy interview with Robinson in the spring of 1748. Her aims and those of her Allies had never been identical. Sometimes they approximated, and all went well. More often they diverged, and there were bickerings and recriminations. She signed the peace treaty under protest, and the ink was hardly dry ere she was discussing her course in the next outbreak of war. She requested the members of the Conference to submit to her in writing their views on the political situation, with special reference to the question whether or not the existing system of alliances should be continued. There was general condemnation of the action of the Sea Powers in obliging Austria to make peace at an unpropitious moment. Still the majority of the Ministers declared themselves unable to recommend any change in the system which had virtually been in force for two hundred years. In more emphatic terms the Emperor also expressed his repugnance to a break with the past. A minority, however, shared the opinion of their Sovereign, that the prevailing system could only be looked upon as conditional, and that if it were prolonged it must be on a basis more favourable to Austria.

The most influential advocate of a new departure was Count Kaunitz, whose services in the Netherlands had been rewarded by admission to the Conference. " His proposals were based on the central point that the rise of Prussia had revolutionized the balance of power in Europe. Prussia was now the arch-enemy of Austria, and must be resisted;

WENZEL ANTON VON KAUNITZ

and Silesia, whence Frederick could strike a blow at the very heart of the monarchy, must be retaken. As for the old allies, England and Holland, it was evident that they had no longer the interests of Austria at heart. England had even forced her to cede Silesia and assent to the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle. In any future war the Maritime Powers were not unlikely to join Prussia, the young and Protestant country. Russia, indeed, was still bound to Austria; but palace revolutions and constant changes in the order of succession made it impossible to depend upon Russian support."[1] "Kaunitz therefore boldly proposed to win the alliance of France, and to secure, if not indeed her assistance, at any rate her neutrality in the event of another Silesian war. The price which he proposed to pay was one which could be no real loss to Austria, the cession of the Netherlands to Don Philip, son-in-law of Louis XV, in exchange for his Italian Duchies."

"For a revolution so radical in her foreign relations Maria Theresa was hardly prepared, though more than once, while the war was in progress, she had attempted to effect a reconciliation with France. . . . While favouring Kaunitz's proposal as a possible alternative, she looked upon it mainly as a means of bringing pressure to bear on England in the adjustment of the differences which threatened to sever the old alliance. At the same time she thought it well to try and promote more friendly relations with the Bourbons, and with that object Kaunitz was sent to Paris as Ambassador in 1750."[2] During his three years' residence there, he strove to the utmost of his capacity to pave the way for an alliance such as he had recommended to the Empress. He was disappointed in his hope of effecting a breach in the political friendship between France and Prussia. But he succeeded, as no other Austrian ambassador had ever done, in becoming a *persona grata* at the Court of Versailles.

Wherever he went he excited interest and remark. In 1750[3] his age was thirty-nine, but his slender build and fair complexion gave him the look of a much younger man. It was difficult to reconcile his juvenile appearance with his reputation as a diplomatist and administrator. More surprising still to his new associates were his easy, graceful carriage, his ready speech and nimble wit. They had been wont to gibe at Teutonic stiffness and backwardness in the fine art of conversation, yet here was a German as skilled as themselves in all that pertained to the decorative side of life. Rumour declared that he took three hours to dress, with four mirrors to assist the process; but an exaggerated attention to outward adornment was scarcely a fault in the days of the dandies.

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[1] A. H. Johnson, *The Age of the Enlightened Despot*, pp. 170–171.

[2] *A History of Germany*, *1715–1815*, pp. 183–184.

[3] In the portrait reproduced as an illustration the letters on the table are addressed "Prince Kaunitz." It is therefore of later date than 1762.

According to Frederick the Great, Kaunitz was "as frivolous in his tastes as he was profound in his knowledge of affairs." One would infer that the frivolity was largely assumed for the purpose of putting people off their guard. When the Count was laboriously accumulating and sifting information as to the actual position and policy of the Italian States, he seemed to the British envoy in Florence a mere collector of bric-à-brac, "a snapper up of unconsidered trifles," to whom a valuable snuff-box should in no wise be entrusted.[1] Needless to say, it was a very different Kaunitz who set himself to gain the goodwill of Louis XV, and to create, in the very heart of France, a party in favour of alliance with Austria.

He might well come to think that the world was a stage, seeing that he was cast for a part before he was out of the cradle. There was no question as to the future of the sickly infant who was also the fifth son of Count Max Ulric von Kaunitz, a deputy-governor of Moravia, married to the heiress of the ancient House of Rietberg. A benefice was bespoken for the young Wenzel, and at the age of twelve he was transferred to the custody of his uncle, the Bishop of Münster. The boy's aptitude for learning and ambition to excel received every encouragement. At sixteen he was a good-looking, accomplished, egotistical young cleric, and a canon of Münster Cathedral.

Suddenly his whole outlook on life was changed. Two of his brothers are said to have perished in a skirmish with the Turks. One after another the survivors died of smallpox. A papal dispensation absolved Wenzel from his vow of celibacy. As heir to the family estates, he joined his parents in Vienna.

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[1] Doran, "*Mann*" *and Manners at the Court of Florence.*

An ecclesiastical upbringing was no drawback to one who was now expected to make his mark as a diplomatist, but it had to be supplemented by legal training. Dissatisfied, apparently, with the teaching at Vienna, Kaunitz betook himself first to Leipzig and then to Leyden, where he graduated as Doctor of both Roman and Canon Law. A leisurely tour through England, France, Italy, and the western states of Germany, was the final stage of a more liberal education than that of the average young nobleman who aspired to the service of the State.

During the closing years of the reign of Charles VI Kaunitz was Imperial Envoy to the Diet at Ratisbon. His marriage with a daughter of the influential family of Starhemberg brought him more prominently before the public. His ability came to be generally recognized. He was no stranger to Maria Theresa when, within a few months of her accession, he was charged with his first mission to Italy.[1]

His dispatches were a revelation to the young monarch. She never cavilled at their length, so entranced was she with the writer's fresh, independent outlook, his suggestiveness when he touched on the European situation, and his power of detecting in a mass of detail the clue to some enigma of Italian statecraft. It seemed to the Queen that the envoy had much of her own enthusiastic patriotism. Certainly he shared her lack of slavish regard for precedent. Baffled by the timidity and conservatism of her old counsellors, she was overjoyed to discover at last a kindred political spirit.

In recent times Maria Theresa's admiration for Kaunitz and willingness to be guided by his advice, have been described as something of the nature of an obsession. In her own day her attitude was justified by the general consensus of opinion. It was indeed no ordinary politician who surmounted with equal ease the difficulties which beset him at Turin, Brussels, Aix-la-Chapelle, and Paris.

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[1] *See* page 87.

Wherever his lot was cast, his great and varied talents created a profound impression. "Adherents, opponents, and men of no party joined in the chorus of approbation." This was the Kaunitz who fascinated Maria Theresa, and for whose sake she tolerated a very different manifestation of personality.

Depreciatory statements concerning one whose place is amongst the foremost statesmen of his generation can only be met by the inquiry, Which Kaunitz? Is it the politician of European renown? Or the man who, in spite of papal dispensation and concern for children early left motherless, might conceivably be mistaken for a flippant, foppish, loose-living eighteenth-century abbé?

Maria Theresa's determination to offer him the highest position in the Ministry was generally applauded. According to a contemporary, "people were all of one mind. There was nobody so entirely fitted as Kaunitz for the office of State Chancellor," which included the control of foreign affairs.

Since 1742 the post had been nominally occupied by Count Ulfeld. His actual vocation was to serve as the mouthpiece of Bartenstein, whose plebeian origin made him ineligible for ministerial rank. The plan worked admirably as long as Maria Theresa and the Secretary were in agreement on the question of foreign policy. When the former came under the influence of Kaunitz she began to revolve plans for getting rid of Ulfeld. Now and again she tried to broach the subject to Bartenstein, but was deterred by the Secretary's embarrassing trick of summoning tears to his eyes. She shrank from anything that might savour of ingratitude to the counsellor recommended to her by her father, and who—for his own purposes, perhaps, but with infinite painstaking—had shown her how to manipulate the reins of government.

In 1752 the death of the Lord Chamberlain gave Maria Theresa an opportunity too valuable to be missed. Ulfeld was bribed to accept the vacant post, and the Chancellorship was offered to Kaunitz. He pleaded his indifferent health as a reason for declining. The Empress was not to be dissuaded. She knew that he was given to take morbid views of his physical condition, and believed that added responsibility would counteract the tendency to valetudinarianism. She also knew well that Kaunitz would never consent to share his authority. Bartenstein had to be deprived of the office which gave him access to the springs of governmental policy. But in consideration of faithful and exceptional service he was enrolled as a member of the Conference, an honour hitherto reserved for the highest nobility.

On New Year's Day, 1753, Kaunitz resigned his embassy. During his residence in Paris he had contrived to ingratiate himself with Madame de Pompadour, and to predispose her in favour of his plan of a diplomatic revolution. His work was ably continued by his successor, Count Starhemberg.

The new Chancellor's arrival in Vienna "was expected by the Empress with the same impatience as Henry VIII looked for the return of Cranmer when he was tired of Wolsey."[1] She was no longer disinclined to consider the proposed alliance between France and Austria. George II had attempted to propitiate her by advocating the election of Archduke Joseph as King of the Romans. But the negotiations ended in failure and acute irritation on both sides. Another source of estrangement was the interference of the Maritime Powers with the Austrian government of the Netherlands. In striking contrast to all this was the friendly relationship which had been established between Austria and Spain. The two Powers guaranteed the existing territorial conditions in Italy by the Treaty of Aranjuez. A good understanding with one branch of the House of Bourbon increased the likelihood of ultimate cordiality with the other. Until that expectation became a certainty it would clearly be inexpedient to make a fresh effort for the recovery of the lost provinces. Kaunitz therefore gave it to be understood that he was directing his energies towards the maintenance of peace.

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[1] Coxe, *The House of Austria*, Vol. III, p. 347.

CHAPTER XXII

OUTBREAK OF THE SEVEN YEARS' WAR—THE CHANGE OF ALLIANCES—THE BATTLES OF PRAGUE AND KOLIN

A POLITICAL cartoon of the year 1756 represents the Gallic cock with a lighted torch in its beak setting fire to the terrestrial globe. Germany is the point in contact with the torch, but the flames burst forth in North America. A reversion of this proceeding would be more in keeping with historical fact.

The War of the Austrian Succession left the French and British colonists in America at daggers drawn. The Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle made no attempt to obviate possible causes of strife, so it was a mere question of time when the struggle for supremacy would be renewed. As it happened, it was in the year 1754 that the torch which set nearly all Europe in a blaze was applied to the globe in the valley of the Ohio. At this date, "with the exception of Jamaica and a few West Indian islands, the English colonies were confined to a comparatively narrow strip between the Alleghany Mountains and the Atlantic. To the north lay Canada, in the possession of the French, and to the south their colony of Louisiana, commanding the mouths of the Mississippi. It was the aim of the French more effectually to occupy the valleys of the Ohio and Mississippi, and thus to connect their colonies in the south with Canada. Had they succeeded in so doing the English would have been prevented from pushing westward, and North America, from the Alleghanies to the Pacific, might have belonged to France."[1]

When, therefore, the agents of a British trading company and other enterprising Virginian and Pennsylvanian colonists began to establish themselves here and there on the Ohio, Duquesne, the Governor of Canada, elected to regard them as intruders. He attacked their settlements, drove them back across the mountains and, foreseeing reprisals, built and manned the fort which was called by his name.

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[1] A. H. Johnson, *The Age of the Enlightened Despot*, p. 172.

The Virginians, indignant at the action of the French, sent against them a body of militia under Washington. The colonists were no match for the seasoned troops of Duquesne, but the home countries took up the quarrel. Diplomatic skill failed to effect any adjustment of French and British claims. Hostilities were frequent on both sides, yet the actual declaration of war was delayed till 1756.

Louis XV had been slow to believe that there would be no peaceable termination of the American dispute. George II, fully anticipating war, had been nearly torn in twain by the conflicting demands of his kingdom and his electorate. Without the help of some continental Power he could not save Hanover from invasion by France or her ally, Prussia. Continental Powers were greedy for subsidies, and England protested that, with a maritime and colonial war on her hands, she could not be bled as heretofore for the benefit of a German principality.

King George first proposed that Austria, still his ostensible ally, should come to the rescue of Hanover, and also increase her forces in the Netherlands. Kaunitz refused to send a single soldier to the electorate. Neither would he consent to do very much for the Low Countries. "Austria, indeed, no longer stood firm to the British alliance. She was ready to leave the Netherlands to their fate. She felt, and very rightly, as Holland did also, that the American question was not a matter of such concern to her as to justify involving herself in a war with France."[1]

Rebuffed by his ally, the distracted Elector-King invoked the aid of Russia for his ancestral dominions. The Czarina Elizabeth, never loath to move her troops westward, promised immediate assistance. But the thing displeased Frederick II. He had got wind of a scheme for the dismemberment of Prussia, in which Russia was leagued with Austria and Saxony. He feared lest the Czarina should draw England into the coalition, and resolved that the friendship between her and his uncle should be nipped in the bud. Thus it came about that one of Frederick's sisters was presently on her way to Hanover to condole with the said uncle, and insinuate the possibility of his finding a protector for the electorate without going outside the family.

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[1] *A History of Germany, 1715–1815*, p. 187.

George II took the hint and entered into negotiations with his nephew. The latter urged his French allies to consent to the neutralization of Hanover and devote their energies to the naval war. The issue of events showed that no saner advice could have been proffered. Its rejection determined Frederick to block the advance of Russia by himself coming to terms with England. By the Convention of Westminster (January, 1756) he undertook to shield Hanover from the French, while George II promised to abandon his design of using Russian troops for that purpose. England and Prussia also guaranteed the neutrality of Germany.

" In the meantime France had dispatched an ambassador to Berlin, asking for a renewal of the old alliance. He was met by the news of the Convention. Frederick, indeed, attempted to show that his agreement with England was purely defensive." France had but to abstain from violating the German possessions of George II and she would be secure from Prussian attack. But French military circles were clamorous for continental warfare, and the French Government was not inclined to carry on a perilous naval struggle without assurance of support on the mainland. Frederick's next step might be a reconciliation with Maria Theresa. Then France, with a British fleet on her coasts and a European coalition at her frontiers, would find herself between the devil and the deep sea.

In her unlooked-for isolation Kaunitz perceived " a golden opportunity for the House of Austria." A few months earlier the irritating demands of England had furnished the Chancellor with plausible reasons for reviving the plan first mooted by him in 1749. This time he secured for it the unqualified approval of Maria Theresa.

As before, the Netherlands were to be used as a bait for obtaining French assistance in the recovery of Silesia and the partitioning of Prussia. In his instructions to Starhemberg, the Ambassador to Versailles, Kaunitz did not minimize the obstacles in the way of his scheme. "A great Power," he says, "has to be convinced that the whole political system which it has hitherto pursued was directly opposed to its true interests." Louis XV and his Ministers saw quite clearly that "France had much to gain by a change in her policy. In a war with England the Austrian alliance or neutrality would be valuable . . . and might lead to an entire or partial annexation of the Netherlands. But there was an underlying suspicion that the interests of Austria and France were not really compatible. For one thing, peace on the Continent would be of enormous advantage to France, whereas Austria wanted to begin a European war."[1] The negotiations hung fire. Hence the exultation of Kaunitz when the Convention of Westminster made him master of the situation. The persuasive skill of Madame de Pompadour ensured enthusiasm for the Austrian alliance in her immediate environment. Louis XV, unable to discern any safer way out of his dilemma, sanctioned a resumption of the negotiations with Starhemberg. The result was the First Treaty of Versailles (May, 1756). It pledged Maria Theresa to neutrality in the Anglo-French war, and Louis XV to respect the Netherlands when striking at Hanover. Each party guaranteed the other's possessions in Europe. In case of an assault, not connected with the war already in progress, either ally might call upon the other for assistance to the extent of twenty-four thousand men.

Before the new agreement was signed, Maria Theresa had received what Kaunitz describes as "a message of comfort and encouragement" from Russia. The Czarina, with a covetous eye on Frederick's Duchy of East Prussia, volunteered help for the recovery of Silesia. It was definitely accepted in the Convention of St. Petersburg (January, 1757). In the following May Louis XV, exasperated by Frederick's unexpected invasion of Saxony, concluded with Austria the Second Treaty of Versailles. He thereby withdrew his opposition to a partition of Prussia, undertook to pay Maria Theresa an annual subsidy, and to place a large army in the field. Thus Kaunitz gained his end. He had entirely revolutionized the political alliances of Europe. He had also completely overreached the flabby French diplomatists. It was preposterous that they should have procured for their Sovereign no greater advantage than the right to a section of the Netherlands, which, however, was not to become valid until Silesia and Glatz had reverted to Austria. France had renounced far more than the Prussian alliance. "Her time-honoured system of supporting a *clientèle* of weak and small states for the purpose of restraining Austria and Russia had perforce to be abandoned. Sweden and Poland were practically given up to Russia."[1] Subsequent happenings have shown that there was much in Kaunitz's argument that Prussia was the real enemy, not only of Austria, but of France; and that in the new circumstances they were the true allies. Had France thrown her whole energy into the European War, it is barely conceivable that Prussia could have escaped partition. Timely concessions to England would have warded off the struggle in America. Louis XV ensured the fulfilment of his prophecy of "a deluge" in the reign of his successor when he decided to carry on war in both hemispheres.[2]

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[1] Hassall, *The Balance of Power*, p. 239.

The whole history of modern Europe, North America, and India hinges on the events of the Seven Years' War that followed the diplomatic revolution. But inasmuch as it was not, like the War of the Austrian Succession, a main factor in the development of the character of Maria Theresa, it may be passed over briefly in a study of her personal life.

The movements of the Austrian and Russian armies during the summer of 1756 convinced Frederick II that an advance on Prussia was imminent. His envoy at Vienna was instructed to submit to Maria Theresa a request for explanations. Her evasive reply determined the King to take the initiative. "This lady wants war," he remarked. "She shall have it." He went through the form of requesting the Elector-King of Saxony-Poland to grant a free passage through his dominions for the Prussian army on its way to Bohemia. But before any reply could be vouchsafed the Prussians had crossed the frontier and occupied the greater part of Saxony. When its ruler sent to expostulate and to propose neutrality, Frederick insisted that Augustus should side with him and permit the electoral troops to be incorporated with those of Prussia. "Good heavens," exclaimed the Saxon envoy, "no one on earth ever heard of such a demand!" "I think it is not without precedent," rejoined Frederick; "but if it were, you know that I pride myself on being original. These are my conditions."

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[1] See *Balance of Power*, p. 242.

[2] See *Age of the Enlightened Despot*, p. 180.

Augustus flatly refused to comply with them. In his fortress of Pirna he awaited help from Austria. Marshal Browne, with the army at Prague, hastened to the relief of the Elector, but was attacked by Frederick at Lobositz, before he could come into touch with the Saxons. Both sides claimed a victory, but the advantage was with the Prussians. The Austrians fell back towards Prague, and the Elector was obliged to capitulate. He betook himself to Warsaw, his Polish capital, and his troops went to swell the ranks of the Prussian army.

The invasion of Saxony was the first intimation to Europe that the curtain had risen on a new military drama. Politicians with a near view of the stage were overwhelmed with requests from those in more remote positions for some clue to the bewildering movements of the chief actors. Why were they grouped in such a novel, not to say unnatural fashion? Why were they fighting without declaration of war? What conceivable connection was there between Saxony and America? And so forth, and so on. In the general hubbub simple explanations were hooted down. Vociferous scandal-mongers had the only chance of reaching the ears of the groundlings. Some attributed all the mischief to the devilry of Frederick of Prussia. His caustic tongue had not spared the faults and foibles of Louis XV and "the three petticoats," to quote His Majesty's polite reference to Maria Theresa, the Czarina, and Madame de Pompadour. He had himself to blame if they made common cause against him. Other voices ascribed the untoward outlook to the vindictive spirit of Maria Theresa. To avenge herself on Frederick she had gone all lengths. She had even entered into a personal correspondence with Madame de Pompadour. The letters which ensured for Austria the staunch support of the mistress of Louis XV were said to be couched in the most flattering terms. The daughter of the proud Habsburgs had so far forgotten her dignity as to address her correspondent as " cousin," and even " sister."

This unlikely story did not originate with King Frederick, but he certainly gave it wide currency by pretending that he had intercepted a portion of the correspondence. Had such epistles verily fallen into his hands or been received by the Pompadour, it is unthinkable that they should neither have been exhibited nor preserved. In view of the fact that no trace of the incriminating documents has at any time been discovered, we may safely accept the assurance of Maria Theresa that she never stooped to the folly of writing them. Her disclaimer is contained in a letter to her relative, Electress Maria Antonia of Saxony, in October, 1763. At that date it was desired to establish closer relations between Saxony and France. Success depended to some extent on the support of the Pompadour. The Electress assumed that Maria Theresa could put her in touch with the influential Marquise. " You are much mistaken," replied the Empress, " if you believe that I have ever been mixed up with the Pompadour. She has not even been the intermediary of a letter (to Louis XV) from myself or my Minister. My representatives have had to pay court to her, like other people, but there has never been the slightest intimacy."

There was, on the contrary, a certain tardiness in acknowledging the services of the King's Favourite. The proposal that some valuable gift should be sent to her from Vienna was talked about for years before it took shape. One could wish, like Marie Antoinette in after days, that the presents had not included a portrait of the Empress; but this was the conventional acknowledgment of royal indebtedness, and the gift was designed to gratify Louis XV, in whose presence it was offered by the Austrian Ambassador, quite as much as the recipient herself.

Starhemberg also undertook to forward to his Sovereign the autographic thanks of Madame de Pompadour. The letter, expressing doubt as to whether or not Her Majesty will deign to receive it, and an overwhelming sense of obligation for Imperial recognition, certainly indicates a first attempt to approach the Empress directly. Kaunitz was concerned lest it should be incumbent on Maria Theresa to send a personal reply. She does not appear to have done so, and doubtless regarded the incident as closed. But it was to the interest of her enemies to magnify it a thousandfold. The rumour of a correspondence between her and the mistress of Louis XV was revived at intervals —a correspondence for which the only adducible shred of evidence is one brief and formal note of thanks.

The advantage to Maria Theresa of the new alliance soon became manifest. When Frederick overstepped her frontier in order to intercept Browne, she straightway called on the French King to fulfil his treaty obligations. Thus she was able to turn the tables on the intruder by placing him in a position as dangerous as her own had been in 1741. When the Emperor Francis persuaded the Imperial Diet to declare war on the King of Prussia as a disturber of the public peace, the latter realized that he would have to contend for the very existence of his kingdom with a coalition unprecedented in history. If it were once set in motion, "Kaunitz could launch battalions against Prussia from every point of the compass." The King's new allies, England and Hanover, watched his movements with bated breath.

To drive him out of Saxony was a primary object with Maria Theresa. Her regret for his success at Lobositz was tempered by satisfaction that the army on which she had expended endless toil and thought, had inflicted as much injury on the Prussian host as it had itself sustained. Marshal Browne had been within an ace of leading the troops to victory. Another half-Irish soldier, Lacy by name, had borne himself with such distinction that he was forthwith promoted from captain to general. It had been well for Austria if these capable and enthusiastic officers had been left in authority. With the return of spring Browne was preparing to take the offensive against Prussia. He had erected magazines and accumulated stores near the frontier of Bohemia to supply the army with which he proposed to recover Saxony. Suddenly all the heart was taken out of the enterprise by the announcement that Prince Charles of Lorraine was to assume the supreme command.

In the absence of any clear statement of fact, the circumstances leading to this ill-omened appointment can only be conjectured. Von Arneth, the most accurate of historians, ransacked the Austrian archives in vain for documents that might throw light on the transaction, or even show how it appeared from the point of view of Kaunitz. Supporters of Maria Theresa, not actually connected with the Court, did not flinch from expressing disapproval. It must, however, be remembered that it was still customary for kings and princes to lead the armies of their countries. The Duke of Cumberland, son of George II, was at the head of the conglomerate force assembling in Hanover. The brothers and other relatives of King Frederick commanded divisions of the Prussian army. It was not perhaps realised that these scions of royalty were as sharply dealt with as officers of lesser degree if they failed to reach the King's standard of efficiency. He would have made short work of a general of the calibre of Prince Charles.

It may be inferred that the latter's reappearance as Commander-in-Chief was less the result of wilful blindness on the part of his sister-in-law than of her reluctance to negative any project which her husband had at heart. He was giving her valuable assistance in the financing of the war, and the impulse to render him some service in return was naturally strong. It is by no means unlikely that Francis constituted himself special pleader for the brother to whom he was warmly attached. Possibly he made the appointment of Charles a condition of taking no part in the campaign himself.

Though peculiarly unfitted to guide the decisions of his consort with regard to the leadership of the army, the Emperor was at one with her in her anxiety when, in the midst of the preparations for the next campaign, Archduke Joseph was seized with smallpox. It was a severe attack, and his mother suffered acutely in being separated from him. When at last Van Swieten reported that the crisis was over and all the symptoms favourable, she replied, "Your note has given me the greatest consolation. My joy is in proportion to all I have undergone while my son's condition was critical. After God, I owe to your care, devotion, and skill the preservation of one so dear to me. I have been your debtor for many a long day. You must judge for yourself the extent of my gratitude for this new benefit. I have no words to express it. I only feel how glad I am. May God grant a happy convalescence."

Scarcely had Joseph begun to recover when his second sister, Marie Christine, showed symptoms of the disease. In her case it fortunately assumed a milder form, and she was not permanently marked. The other members of the family escaped infection, and Maria Theresa was free to concentrate her attention on the war when, in the month of April, Frederick left his winter quarters in Dresden. In four separate columns his army crossed the Bohemian frontier with the view of converging on Prague. "This is a most unexpected movement, which greatly astonishes the world-theatre—pit, boxes, and gallery alike—and which is, above all, interesting on the stage itself, where the actors had been counting on a quite opposite set of entries and activities!"[1] Browne's dispositions, not ill-adapted for an advance, proved most unsatisfactory when Charles of Lorraine, "that incarnation of indecision and undue caution," resolved to assume a defensive attitude. The magazines were seized by the Prussians, and supplies destined for Austrian consumption went to the support of their enemies. In vain did Browne implore the Prince to give battle before Frederick could unite his forces with those of Marshal Schwerin, who was approaching from Silesia. The new commander insisted on falling back on Prague. There, in a strong position, with a swamp in front and a hill guarding either flank, he chose to await the coming of Daun with reinforcements from Moravia.

But Frederick saw that his one chance was to strike before Daun's arrival. By almost superhuman exertions he brought his army across the Elbe, effected a junction with Schwerin, and attacked the formidable Austrian position. The issue of the day was often in doubt, the losses on both sides were appalling. Schwerin perished in an attempt to rally the infantry at a critical moment. But when Browne received the wound that eventually proved mortal, and Prince Charles was incapacitated by some form of illness, the leaderless Austrians were dislodged, driven back to the walls of the Bohemian capital, and cooped up there to the number of fifty thousand.

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[1] Carlyle, *Frederick the Great,* Book XVIII, Chap. 1.

"This is the famed Battle of Prague, fought May 6th, 1757, which sounded through all the world—and used to deafen us in drawing-rooms within man's memory. Results of it were: on the Prussian side, killed, wounded, and missing, 12,500; on the Austrian, 13,000 (prisoners included), with much war-gear gone the wrong road—and a very great humiliation and disappointment, though they had fought well. 'No longer the old Austrians by any means,' as Frederick sees."[1]

The news reached London late on May 19th. "It is on the stroke of eleven," writes Horace Walpole to his friend George Montagu, "and I have but time to tell you that the King of Prussia has gained the greatest victory that ever was, except the Archangel Michael's. King Frederick has only demolished the Dragoness. He attacked her army in a strong camp on the 6th . . . took it with all the tents, baggage, etc., and, they say, Prague since."

Rumour was, however, at fault. The hapless city had not been taken, but it was blockaded for the third time since the accession of Maria Theresa. So frequent had been the scenes of carnage within and without its walls that the student of history needs no incentive of strange legend in order to picture "a midnight host of spectres pale beleaguering the walls of Prague."[2]

The siege of 1757, one of the most destructive, was of mercifully brief duration. While it lasted the Empress was tortured with apprehension lest a garrison, threatened by hunger, should enter into some humiliating compact with the enemy and ruin the Austrian cause. By great good luck her message to the pent-up officers was not intercepted. "I cannot too strongly impress on your minds," she wrote, "that the troops will incur everlasting disgrace should they not effect what the French, in the last war, performed with far inferior numbers. The security of Bohemia, of my other hereditary dominions, and of the Empire itself, depends on a gallant defence and the preservation of Prague. The army under the command of Marshal Daun is daily strengthening, and will soon be in a condition to raise the siege."[1]

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[1] Carlyle, *Frederick the Great*, Book XVIII, Chap. II.

[2] Longfellow, *The Beleaguered City*.

Leopold, Count Daun was on his way to join Prince Charles when he heard of the disaster. He halted to collect the fugitives and add them to his original corps. Not till he was strongly reinforced did he advance towards the Bohemian capital. At Kolin, on the Upper Elbe, he came into conflict with the Prussians, and overwhelmed them by superior numbers (June 18th, 1757).

An encounter between the two armies had been expected at an earlier date. The result was awaited in Vienna with feverish impatience, for another Prussian victory would once more expose the city to imminent danger. When the morning of the 20th brought the announcement of victory, the citizens were frantic with delight. Daun's name was in every mouth. Daun had vanquished the hitherto invincible King of Prussia. "Long live Daun!" they shouted. "Long live Maria Theresa!"

To none had the tidings brought such joy and relief as to the Empress, whose hopes had repeatedly been shattered since the opening of the campaign. She at once set out to congratulate Countess Daun. "Feasts were given, medals struck, and presents distributed." A military order of merit, the *Theresenorden*, was instituted. The officers who had distinguished themselves in the recent action were admitted to its various grades. With his special decoration, Daun received an address from the Conference, to which, in her own handwriting, Her Majesty had added: "Before the whole army you have proved your right to membership of the Order of Theresa. You are the first to receive its grand cross."

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[1] Quoted by Coxe, *The House of Austria*, Vol. III, p. 376.

Frederick's defeat forced him to raise the siege of Prague. The released Austrians sallied forth in time to inflict severe loss on the retreating enemy; but they did not make the most of their chances. "It was a great misfortune for Austria that Prince Charles should have so far recovered his health as to be able to take command when his force united with that of Daun. . . . A really vigorous pursuit ought to have clinched the success of Kolin by cutting off either the besiegers of Prague or the remnant of Frederick's army." Still it was a forlorn host that recrossed the Bohemian frontier. "At the end of August the Prussian King found himself in the same position as he had occupied in April, only with his most trusted lieutenant dead and his army nearly ruined."[1] It was a further blow to his hopes when the Duke of Cumberland was defeated by the French, who proceeded to occupy Hanover. Frederick was thus threatened with invasion from the west, at the very time when Silesia was exposed to the Austrians, when also the Russians were becoming hostile on his eastern and the Swedes on his northern frontiers.

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[1] *A History of Germany, 1715–1815*, pp. 212–213.

CHAPTER XXIII

POLITICAL CRICKET, OR THE LAST STAGES OF THE SEVEN YEARS' WAR

THE continental situation in the midsummer of 1757 is cleverly touched off in a cartoon entitled *The Cricket Players of Europe.*[1] It illustrates contemporary sport in so far as the players are provided with bats of the old-fashioned curved shape, while the stumps are two in number, and the score is kept by notching each run on a stick.

In the political game, however, Frederick II has donned a complete suit of mail in order to keep up his wicket against Maria Theresa. Arrayed in royal robes, embroidered with eagles, she is about to bowl, but pauses to remark, " Now, sir, mind what you are about. I have a notch more than you." The King, preparing to stop the ball, retorts, " I don't mind your notch, madam, though I design to have a good stroke at you this time, so mind your eye. And (to Louis XV, who is fielding close to the Empress) Stand out of the way, monsieur. I design to send this ball to the She-Bear yonder." The Bear, otherwise Elizabeth of Russia, a stout woman in regal attire, runs towards Maria Theresa, crying, " I am coming to help you, madam. If you are tired, I will bowl for you."

In the background stand Turkey and the umpires, who are the neutral Powers, Holland and Spain. In a corner of the field Saxony-Poland sits on the ground weeping and exclaiming, " I can play no more, I have had such a dam'd knock."

The scorers, probably the King of Sweden and the Duke of Brunswick, are also seated on the ground, holding their knives for the cutting of the tallies. Beside them are two upright figures, Francis I and George II. The former, speaking for the Empire, remarks, " Ah, boy, there was a time when I could play with the best of them." His companion's comment is, " Ay, ay, never mind. I warrant I'll get some notches. And if I find the odds against, I'll hedge off. I can't say I like her bowling. She seems not to tire."

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[1] *Political and Personal Satires*, Vol. XIII, No. 2506. The original has unfortunately been coloured by hand, hence the blurred appearance of the figures.

Neither did her side lose when she yielded her place to the She-Bear, for Frederick's lieutenant in East Prussia was worsted by the Russian commander at Gross Jägerndorf. Hadik, the most prominent of the Hungarian generals, seized the moment of the King's discomfiture for a forced march on Berlin, where he exacted heavy tribute before he withdrew.[1] But at this point the luck turned. Before the wonderful year was at an end Frederick had scored two of his most notable successes by defeating the combined French and Imperial armies at Rossbach and the Austrians at Leuthen. The first victory dispersed the Imperial contingents and drove the French back to the Rhine. It set English bonfires blazing, and Pitt saw his way to " a conquest of America in Germany " by hearty co-operation with the King of Prussia. The Hanoverian army, largely reinforced and taken into English pay, was placed under the command of Prince Ferdinand of Brunswick. His vigorous measures put a speedy end to the foreign occupation of Hanover, and transformed it into a barrier between France and Brandenburg.

Frederick's triumph over the French made him the hero of Germans of every political denomination, and Rossbach became the starting-point of the movement destined to culminate in national unity under the leadership of Prussia. To the King himself his victory was chiefly important because it removed the impediment to a concentration of Prussian energy in Silesia. As he marched thither it seemed as if he were about to hurl himself on destruction. The Austrians were re-establishing themselves in the province, and had recently captured Breslau. In numbers they were

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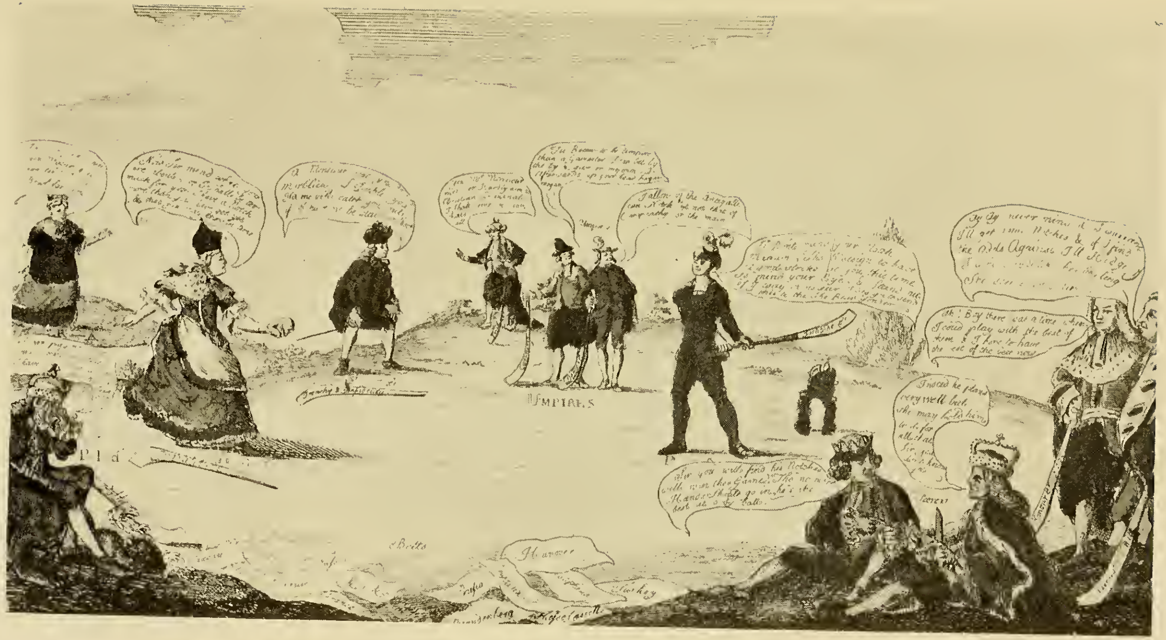
[1] This incident is popularly referred to as the *Husarenritt.*



THE CRICKET PLAYERS OF EUROPE

nearly three to one of the Prussians. It ought to have been an easy task to overwhelm Frederick and gladden the heart of Maria Theresa by the restoration of "the fairest jewel in her crown." But alas for her cherished hopes! The fatuous proposals of Charles of Lorraine prevailed over the more sagacious advice of Daun, and Frederick recovered not only Breslau, but wellnigh the whole of Silesia by his success at Leuthen.

The grief of the Empress was mingled with bitter regret for disasters which ought to have been averted, and with mortification at being constrained to yield to the demand on all sides for the removal of Prince Charles. Perverse as ever, he ignored the hints that it would be well for him to resign. He would not even listen to the discreet advice of the Emperor. It was a poor return for the benefits he had received from his sister-in-law to force upon her the disagreeable necessity of explicitly dispensing with his services. That she was able to do this without estranging the defaulter says much for her tact and considerateness.

"Dismayed for a moment by the calamity of Leuthen, she was soon busy with schemes for retrieving the failure of 1757. Vigorous measures were taken to increase and equip the broken army now rallying in Bohemia."[1] From the installation of Daun as Commander-in-Chief the happiest results were expected. To some extent they were attained, though long before the war was over it had become manifest that in Gideon Laudon, Austria had a general more worthy of being compared with Prince Eugene than her chosen leader.

The descendant of an old Scottish family, Laudon was by profession a soldier of fortune, albeit with characteristics that made him nearer akin to the ideal knight-errant. In the Russian Army he served a lengthy apprenticeship to the art of war. He was subsequently induced to offer his services to the King of Prussia. But with his rugged exterior and diffident manner he was at a disadvantage amongst men who had the knack of commending themselves to a critical monarch. Thus the story of Louis XIV and Eugene was repeated. Unappreciated at Berlin, Laudon sought and obtained a commission in the Austrian Army, and Frederick ultimately discovered his most formidable antagonist in the man who had volunteered to fight on his side.

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[1] *Germany, 1715–1815*, p. 228.

When the hazardous game was resumed in the spring of 1758, the more competent leadership of the Austrian army told heavily against Frederick. Early in the campaign his endeavour to seize the Moravian town of Olmutz was foiled by the promptitude of Laudon; while in October he sustained a crushing defeat at Hochkirch, in Saxony. Daun monopolized the laurels of the day, but until Lacy drew his attention to it, he does not seem to have observed the ill-judged exposure of the left Prussian flank, which gave him his advantage. And Daun's second victory was, like his first, considerably neutralized by failure to follow it up.

The news of Hochkirch was a welcome break in the clouds that overhung the Court of Versailles. The untoward experiences of the French at Rossbach had been promptly avenged by their ally. Her friendship had become a more valuable asset. Louis XV proposed to cement it by a marriage between his granddaughter, Isabella of Parma, and the Archduke Joseph.

To Maria Theresa the suggestion was peculiarly gratifying. She would have closed with it at once but for a prior understanding that the heir to her throne should marry the elder daughter of the King of the Two Sicilies. It had transpired that she was weak physically, if not mentally. Yet even when Joseph, who had been comparing reports and likenesses, fixed his choice on Isabella, his mother hesitated to entertain the idea of slighting the daughter of the man who was obviously destined to succeed his stepbrother on the Spanish throne. Fortunately Kaunitz was able to find a diplomatic solution of the problem. By divers concessions he obtained that the younger Sicilian princess, Marie Louise, should be affianced to the Archduke Charles, the heir of Tuscany. This left the way clear for the formal betrothal of Joseph and Isabella. The Archduke was seventeen; the daughter of Don Philip of Parma nearly a year younger. Their marriage was wisely delayed.

The campaign of 1759 was one long triumph for the Empress-Queen. At no point could Frederick get the better of his opponents. In August his fortunes reached their lowest ebb. His attempt to check a fresh advance of the Russians by giving battle at Kunersdorf would have been successful but for the timely intervention of an Austrian contingent under Laudon. In the end of the day the Prussian army was routed with such terrible slaughter that Frederick, in despair, made no effort to protect himself from the deadly fire. He was eventually forced away from the field by a company of his own troops. "My coat is riddled with bullets," he wrote; "two horses have been killed under me. It is my misfortune to be still alive."

This was the moment when a commander of any resource would have struck home and brought the war to a close. Laudon was alive to the opportunity, but the Russian general refused even to engage in a pursuit. Frederick had been expecting his death-blow in the fall of Berlin. To his no small surprise he had time to recover from his despondency and rally his troops. Before the end of the year he was again on the heels of Daun, but was repulsed with renewed loss at Maxen.

During this life-and-death struggle the French made a fresh effort to strike at Brandenburg through Hanover. At Minden they were, however, defeated by Ferdinand of Brunswick, and forced to return to the Rhine. Other disasters made the year 1759 one of the blackest in the annals of France. Her fleets were destroyed by Hawke and Boscawen. Canada was lost by Wolfe's victory at Quebec. The claim to supremacy in the Carnatic passed from the French to the British East India Company. Louis XV would have abandoned the hopeless contest and come to terms with his rival but for the treaties with Austria, which confused the issues of the Anglo-French and the Third Silesian wars. Constrained to go on with the game, though all the odds were against him, Louis might well have exclaimed in his turn, "I like not the bowling of the Empress, she seems not to tire."

Her accumulating notches were a sure antidote to weariness. She could hardly wait till the winter was over and the campaign of 1760 had begun. A few more Austrian balls and Frederick's wicket would be down, and his reputation as a champion at an end for ever. Thus she argued, not dreaming that the war would drag on for three more years, or that she would never again have the option of dictating terms of peace.

In 1760 Frederick recovered his military prestige. By the end of 1761 he was almost at his last gasp. George III had succeeded to the British throne, and his desire to end the war led to the fall of Pitt and the premiership of Lord Bute. With the cessation of hostilities between England and France it looked as if Frederick would be crushed between the upper and nether millstones of Austria and Russia; but the death of the Czarina in 1762 changed the whole aspect of affairs. Her successor, Peter III, was ready to champion the Prussian cause through thick and thin. And even when Peter was assassinated, after a reign of a few months, his widow and successor, Catherine II, elected to remain neutral. Left single-handed, and with the dead weight of Saxony to support, Maria Theresa was forced to overcome her repugnance to a drawn game. She had been duped by the hopes which won her assent to the policy of Kaunitz. After seven years' expenditure of blood and treasure she had neither regained Silesia nor wrested his sceptre from the King of Prussia. But it is characteristic of the monarch, who judged by intention rather than result, that she was more concerned about her Chancellor's alarming illness in the autumn of 1762 than the difficulties in which he had involved her. In her correspondence with his deputy, she passes from business of State to inquiries about the patient, and disquisitions on the right use of quinine in fever cases. When Kaunitz becomes convalescent, she goes to consult him until he is able to resume attendance at Court, and full direction of the Austrian representatives at Hubertsburg, in Saxony, where peace was being negotiated. He proposed that Austria should retain the county of Glatz, and that Saxony should be compensated for her sufferings during the war. "Not a foot of land, and no compensation to Saxony; not a village, not a penny," was Frederick's reply. Saxony merely regained her lost provinces, while Austria obtained a promise of the Brandenburg vote in favour of Joseph at the election of a King of the Romans, and recognition of a proposed arrangement for the establishment of an

Austrian archduke in Modena. Such were the provisions of the Treaty of Hubertsburg (Feb. 15th, 1763). Five days earlier the Peace of Paris had ended the struggle between England and France, and secured to the former country the fruits of victories in North America, the West Indies, and Hindustan. The British triumph was wholly due to the brilliant ministry of the elder Pitt. Its most significant commemoration was the renaming of Fort Duquesne. That stronghold had become Pittsburg.

Carlyle justly emphasizes the fact that "only in outward and tangible points" could a treaty restore Austria and Prussia to the position they had held before the conflict. Though "not a hamlet had changed its ruler," far-reaching were the consequences of "the tornado of strife such as the world had not witnessed since the Thirty Years' War. The kingdom of Prussia had become one of the five great Powers of Europe, and henceforth disputed with Austria the leadership in Germany." But Austria had obtained effective security for her frontiers by showing herself strong enough to resist attack. When she again fell foul of Prussia, in 1778, there was no precipitate action on the part of Frederick. His prowess had gained him the title of Frederick the Great, but he had failed as signally as Maria Theresa in making the war yield him acquisitions of territory. That the Empress had fathomed his design of annexing Saxony and compensating the Elector in Bohemia may be inferred from her letter to the besieged officers at Prague. The issue had verily turned on the ability of the Austrians to prevent the fall of the Bohemian capital and consequent occupation of the kingdom.

Maria Theresa's correspondence on the subject of the war goes to prove her complete mastery of the details of each campaign. Again and again she urges her over-cautious commanders to take the offensive and proceed with the vigour which alone could exhaust the resources of Frederick. More intolerable than ever must have seemed the circumstances which condemned her to look on instead of taking the field in person.

CHAPTER XXIV

FAMILY HISTORY, 1760–63

THE chronicler or draughtsman who deals with any aspect of the Silesian wars, naturally lays stress on the more virile qualities of the Empress-Queen—her grim determination, her fighting spirit, her grasp of military detail, her statesmanlike comprehension of the significance of every strategical movement. Yet the human, lovable side of her nature was never obscured. It is very manifest in her intimate correspondence with friends and kindred, and in such contemporary narratives as the *Memoirs of Prince Albert of Saxony.*

As a youth of twenty-one, the Prince, who was the fourth son of Augustus of Saxony-Poland, had his first glimpse of life at the Austrian capital. He and his brother Clement, his junior by a year, had grown weary of the enforced residence of the Saxon Court at Warsaw. They therefore joined the army of Maria Theresa as volunteers, and served throughout the campaign of 1759. When the troops went into winter quarters, the superior officers hurried off to Vienna to enjoy the season's round of gaieties. In the early days of 1760, the Saxon princes took the same road. It had been arranged that they should celebrate the New Year by making the personal acquaintance of their Imperial relatives. The Empress was their mother's cousin, but they had an idea that she was an exceedingly formidable personage.

"The day after our arrival in Vienna," writes Prince Albert, "we were presented to the Emperor. He received us with the frankness and urbanity which make him the best-liked man in the whole Court. Then he led the way to the apartments of the Empress, who also welcomed us with the utmost cordiality. We left her audience-chamber full of enthusiasm for the great princess, who has won the admiration of all Europe. Our next visit was to the Archduke Joseph, a much-talked-about prince, albeit he was two months short of nineteen, and his character virtually unknown. One could only perceive that he was extremely reserved. Finally we were introduced to the other members of the numerous and good-looking family," that is to say, to no fewer than a dozen young people, ranging from Archduchess Marianne, aged twenty-two, to Maximilian, who had not yet completed his fourth year.

Though Joseph maintained his attitude of aloofness, the visitors at once felt at ease with his light-hearted, glib-tongued brother Charles. The younger Archdukes, Leopold, Ferdinand, and Maximilian, were still in the schoolroom or the nursery. Marianne's continued weak health made her less prominent at Court than the sisters nearest her in age, Marie Christine, Elizabeth, and Amelia. She had four other sisters, mere children in 1760, the Archduchesses Joanna, Josepha, Caroline, and Antoinette.

When the introductions were over, the Saxon princes were invited to be present at the evening assembly of notabilities in the reception-rooms of the Empress. Her elder daughters helped to entertain the company with music. "All the princesses were beautiful," says the gallant Albert, "but the second had such a graceful figure, such a noble, intellectual countenance that I was in love with her from the very first moment. During our visit to Vienna, there was a great deal of snow. One day the Court made an excursion to Schönbrunn in sledges. The ladies and gentlemen drew lots for partners. As luck would have it, my lot was to be the companion of the Archduchess, whose engaging qualities had already made so profound an impression upon me. Thus I was able to spend several hours in her society. Her conversation was as delightful as her appearance, yet I dared not tell her what I felt. A princess of her standing was far above a portionless younger son."

The quick-witted girl of nearly eighteen was, however, fully capable of gauging the situation. Her feelings were not involved. She had been strongly attracted by a declared suitor, Prince Louis of Würtemberg, and cherished the hope that her parents would withdraw their objections to him. But to be offered homage without words was not an unpleasing experience. Was it quite by chance that at the next sleighing expedition, when there was no drawing of lots, Albert was again paired off with the object of his devotion? Less serious than on the former occasion, she was none the less adorable. The kinsman who kept himself in hand and, without being dull, refrained from unadvised protestations, rose steadily in her esteem.

Maria Theresa's political detractors are wont to describe her Court as a gloomy place, where her jealousy would only tolerate women destitute of all attractiveness. This was not the verdict of such as had the entry to the charmed circle. "In spite of the war," says Prince Albert, "there was much in the way of entertainment and merrymaking, both at Court and in the residences of the nobility. The Emperor's love of social pleasure, the Empress's desire to please her husband, a young household with its natural propensity to enjoyment, all combined to keep things lively." Austrian society had changed since the days of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu. "There was in Vienna," continues the writer, "a goodly number of beautiful women. I saw the lovely Princess Auersperg.[1] The Emperor makes no secret of his passion for her. Prince Albert was more drawn to the Empress. He might well chant her praises, for she literally showered benefits on her young visitors. It was her way of trying to make amends for the ill-fortune that had overtaken their family and country in consequence of the Austro-Prussian quarrel. Her parting gift to Albert was the promise of a commission in her army should he decide for a military life. So far as the Prince was concerned nothing could have been more desirable than the prospect thus opened out. He was ready to do anything to remain in touch with the Austrian Court. But the decision rested with his father. At the consultation in Warsaw, Augustus wisely determined to leave his son's future in the hands of the Empress-Queen. He could not, however, refrain from inquiring if Albert knew his own mind. "A few months ago you were all for an ecclesiastical career," remarked the parent, who had been casting about for the means of giving effect to the supposed vocation. "That was a counsel of despair," replied the son, and the explanation was accepted. But Augustus had no intention of taking trouble for nothing. It was speedily discovered that Prince Clement would make an excellent Churchman.

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[1] A daughter of Neipperg married to Prince Adam Auersperg.

In the early autumn of 1760, the princes paid a second visit to the Emperor and Empress. There was some advance in intimacy, for the Court was at Laxenburg where opportunities of informal intercourse were more frequent than in Vienna. Francis showed goodwill by inviting his guests to boar-hunts and praising their dexterity. Albert received officer's rank in a cavalry regiment, and Clement the promise of a bishopric. When, for the second time, they took leave of their relations, the Imperial Family was returning to Vienna to complete the arrangements for Joseph's marriage on October 8th.

Those who take exception to what they call the bourgeois element in Maria Theresa's character are particularly scornful of her matchmaking proclivities and her absorbing interest in weddings, no matter who was getting married. When the bridegroom-elect was her eldest son, the hope of the monarchy, a possible emperor, and the first of the rising generation to assume domestic responsibilities, her determination "to do things handsomely" fairly ran away with her discretion. She had set her face like a flint against the peace which France would have welcomed in 1759. But the campaign of 1760 was not leading up to a more advantageous settlement, and war expenditure still forced extraordinary measures on the financial department. The Empress was always going to retrench, but her good resolutions were apt to take wing at the first prompting of generosity or the first appeal for almsgiving. Now she refused to be gainsaid, though marriage celebrations on the lavish scale which she deemed fitting, were bound to cripple her resources for many a long day to come. Her letters show that a year before the event she had begun to plan the ceremonial. She expressed much satisfaction when Prince Wenzel Liechtenstein undertook to represent the Archduke at the marriage by proxy and to escort the bride to Vienna. The most successful and disinterested of the army reformers was worthy of the honour; but his vast wealth had not a little to do with his selection. Though he spent money freely, the impoverished State was still mainly responsible for the expense of a convoy which required three hundred post-horses to transport it to and from Italy. And this was but, as it were, the overture to scene after scene of surpassing brilliance in Vienna itself.

It was of the irony of things that this parade of magnificence should be occasioned by the union of two young people, neither of whom attributed any importance to outward show. Joseph's love of simplicity almost amounted to a passion; and few have found the glory of the world less alluring than Isabella of Parma. The death of her mother, the favourite daughter of Louis XV, had made the marriage less of a bond between the French and Austrian Courts than had been anticipated. Yet, notwithstanding the change of circumstance, Maria Theresa could conceive of no more desirable wife for her son than the one on whom he had set his mind. To Prince Liechtenstein she wrote, "Everything that pertains to this marriage is entirely in accordance with my wishes. I flatter myself that it will ensure to my later years a freedom from care denied to me in youth."

Glowing accounts of the young princess had been sent to Vienna by Count Mercy-Argenteau, the Austrian Resident in Parma. He told of her brightness and charm, her gentleness and kindness of heart, and her exceptional intellectual and artistic gifts. Her mother has received credit for the care expended on her education, but praise is more probably due to her father. Philip of Parma's genuine love of art and letters would have commended him to the Italian despots of the Renaissance. His tastes were fully shared by his talented elder daughter. At eighteen "her attainments would have been thought remarkable in an able young man." Her mind, she said, was not unlike her desk. All sorts of things found a place in it: "a little philosophy, a little morals, light romances, deep reflections, merry songs, history, physics, logic, metaphysics." Amongst the deep reflections were those that turned on the significance of life and its intimations of immortality. In an age which symbolized its attitude to death by skulls and cross-bones this girlish thinker was half in love with the waiting shadow that could unlock so many mysteries. The cloistral seclusion of her upbringing and the over-stimulation of her brain may account for her tendency to brooding melancholy and her presentiment of early death. It was the one indication of a morbid strain in an otherwise healthy mentality. That she never became the prey of her gloomy fancies was largely due to her skill as a violinist. She could double the parts of Saul and David.

From her sequestered life in Parma and association with a sister and brothers younger than herself, and of quite ordinary intelligence, Isabella passed at a bound to one of the most prominent positions at the Imperial Court. She was neither dazzled nor dismayed. In striking contrast to her handsome fair-haired sisters-in-law was the dark-complexioned descendant of the Bourbons of France and Spain, with lovely eyes and hair, though with more of piquancy than actual beauty in her expressive features. Her gift of gifts was a magnetic power that was simply irresistible.

If Joseph made no immediate demonstration of feeling, he was none the less convinced that he had chosen the right princess. His more emotional mother could hardly find words to express her delight. Three days after the marriage she writes to one of her relatives: "We have gained a charming daughter-in-law in every respect, and I am on the tip-top of happiness. The weather, the festivities, everything, in short, was all that could be desired. I quite forgot that I was a King in my gladness as a mother. If only the good God would send us such news as would justify negotiations for peace, I would have nothing left to wish for."

Happy in the approval of her husband and his family, the bride of eighteen was likewise happy in her first intimate friendship with a girl of her own age, her sister-in-law Marie Christine. They read and studied together, exchanged innumerable written messages, and exercised, on the whole, a salutary influence on each other. Their mutual admiration and ardent affection make their letters read like an amatory correspondence. Isabella's peculiarly fervid expressions of devotion justify Marie's occasional doubts of their sincerity. The writer was persuaded that every word came from her heart. But the fact remains that she was a reader of novels, with a gift of verbal expression, and that she had been deprived of the opportunity of writing genuine love-letters.

When the correspondents disagree there is no question of their meaning, and the delivery of home-truths is invaluable for the light thrown on their respective characters. One can sympathize with Marie's sweeping condemnation of her friend's unnatural hankering after a disembodied state. "Allow me to tell you," she writes to Isabella, "that your great longing for death is an out-and-out evil thing. It either points to selfishness or a desire to seem heroic, and it is at variance with your own loving disposition. It ought to be repugnant to you to give utterance to sentiments so grievous to people who are absolutely bound up in your existence." The culprit duly expressed contrition, but it was apparently beyond the power of her will to subjugate her feeling on this particular point.

Equally uncompromising is Isabella's remonstrance when Marie had been making a storm in a teacup about one of Joseph's satirical speeches. "My deep love for you prompts me to send you this note. I conjure you in the name of that love to give heed to what I say. You know what happened yesterday. It may lead to endless trouble if you persist in your attitude. I have convinced the Archduke that he was in the wrong. To tell the truth, you were equally so, but it was just as well to ignore that. I beseech you therefore, when you meet him, to act as if nothing had happened. If he is backward in making advances, take no notice. Should any reference be made to the disagreement treat it as a joke. If you will follow this course I can make him feel more guilty than ever. . . . But do try to give in to him more and not to take him so seriously."

Marie must have made the required effort to subdue her sensitiveness to raillery, for she often took part in her brother's extemporized concerts. In the restful atmosphere of his own household, playing on the clavichord the accompaniments to his wife's violin, he was a very different being from the proud, uncommunicative, censorious youth who puzzled outsiders. With the elfin charm of a pied piper

Isabella had drawn him in the first instance by her music. As time went on they discovered other interests in common. For a mere girl the Archduchess' insight into character was almost uncanny. It kept her from making any mistake in regard to her husband, and was a very lamp to her feet amidst the mazes of the Austrian Court. She deprecated Marie's complaint of Joseph's coldness. " His nature is not primarily emotional," said his wife. " Caresses and words of endearment will be put down to flattery or hypocrisy unless you have established a sure claim to his esteem. Given esteem, friendship follows as a matter of course." A glance over the Archduke's subsequent career suggests that the friendship might still be a lukewarm affair if the estimable person were not also his intellectual equal. By rare good fortune, a matrimonial alliance for political reasons had given him the very companionship that could satisfy and stimulate him. His marriage was, in his own words, " unsurpassed for happiness."

On very insufficient grounds it has been assumed that Isabella did not share her husband's satisfaction. There seems no doubt that she had all the felicity possible to a woman whose genius had found no adequate means of expression. Her disquieting fixed idea has its natural and excusable aspect. Time and domestic happiness might reconcile her to her lot. Scarcely in youth could she feel at home in the restricted house of her life. Neither she nor her consort can be judged by ordinary standards, but their own testimony as to their relations ought to be final. Even Isabella's impassioned letters to Marie contain allusions to a stronger tie. " Much as I love you," she says on one occasion, " I feel that the Archduke comes first."

In March, 1762, the new household celebrated the birth of a daughter. The Empress, overjoyed that everything had gone well, forgot to be disappointed with the small namesake, who had dispelled her hope of a grandson. Her letters contain many affectionate references to " Little Theresa." Her tenderness to her own children had left nothing to be desired in their early years. Unfortunately, as they grew up, the thought of their destinies tended to come between them and their mother. Her consuming anxiety that they should worthily represent the House of Habsburg made her less observant of their good points than of the weaknesses which had to be eradicated. This gave her an appearance of severity she was far from feeling. It was a further bar to intimacy that the children knew that their characters and futures were talked over with political advisers. Her Majesty's confidence was not always respected. "The Empress is such a very good friend herself," said her daughter-in-law, "that she forgets good friends are rare and that very few persons can be trusted without reserve." Isabella yielded to no one in her admiration for Maria Theresa, and she perceived more clearly than any one else the exceeding loneliness of the monarch's position. In the bygone days, in Parma, her own mother had been as companionable as an elder sister. But the life of a princess with no political responsibility had little in common with that of the reigning sovereign of a great European state. Besides, the number of Her Majesty's daughters and the slight difference in their ages made it difficult to accord privileges to one which could not be extended to another. Isabella could safely feel that she was taking no one's place, when she became the friend and confidante of her mother-in-law, and her chief comfort in the early days of 1761, when Archduke Charles died of the after-effects of smallpox. His open-hearted, vivacious disposition had made him curiously like the young prince who had been transplanted from Lorraine to Austria in Maria Theresa's childhood. This resemblance rendered her specially lenient to the shortcomings of her second son. It was a sorrowful task to negotiate for the transference to Leopold of the succession in Tuscany, and the expectation of marriage with the Princess of Spain. Her Majesty's fourth son, Ferdinand, would, it was hoped, inherit Leopold's former prospect of becoming Governor of Milan and husband of Marie Beatrix d'Este, heiress of the Duchy of Modena.

But neither the love lavished upon her by her husband and her mother-in-law, nor her own fondness for her little daughter, could make Isabella desire a lengthening of her time upon earth. She could not, however, brook the idea of leaving Maria Theresa to her former isolation. When the expected summons came she determined that Marie should succeed to her place. And since her sister-in-law flatly refused to listen to presentiments, it occurred to Isabella to draw up a series of instructions as a posthumous guide for her friend. This strangest of testamentary documents has fortunately been preserved. Its vivid character-sketches of the Emperor and Empress, and its sidelights on the life of the Imperial Family at the close of the Seven Years' War, make it a record of permanent value.

"The Empress," says the writer, "has an exceptionally tender, clinging, sympathetic disposition. Those whom she loves, she loves in very truth. She would sacrifice herself for any member of her family, or even for her friends. . . . Through suffering she has learned to know life and the world. Her advice is therefore extremely helpful. It is much to be wished that she could derive more personal advantage from her experience and her talents. But she underestimates herself and too often distrusts her own good judgment. Her hesitation gives an opening to individuals whom she takes to be wise, but who are merely self-seeking and able to effect their own ends under a cloak of zealous loyalty. . . . If you find yourself in any difficulty, I counsel you to go straight to the Empress and get her opinion there and then. When she has told you what she advises, hasten to thank her, to express conviction of the rightness of her decision and your desire that the matter should remain between herself and you. Then you may feel sure it will go no further." On the other hand, Marie must be prepared to hear that in a moment of impulsiveness or irritation the Empress has formed some injudicious resolution. To express disapproval would be impossible, but there were delicate ways of insinuating a need of reconsideration.

Though Isabella took many difficulties to her mother-in-law, the most harassing of all had to be kept to herself. To maintain a friendly relationship with both Emperor and Empress was like walking on a tight-rope. The Archduchess fully appreciated her father-in-law's good points, but she could not, like Maria Theresa, shut her eyes to his faults. It was natural that he should expect to be on an equality with his wife, as far as the younger generation was concerned. "And indeed," says Isabella, "one's instinctive impulse is to respond freely to his outspoken friendliness." It was essential that he should think the members of his family did so respond, otherwise he would be offended. And to offend the Emperor would estrange the Empress and be the end of all things. Yet there must needs be reservations as long as His Majesty was influenced by his infatuation for Wilhelmina von Auersperg. "I wager," continues the Archduchess, "that she is consulted about many things she has no business to meddle with." It behoved one therefore to be extremely circumspect in order to keep inviolate the confidences of the Empress and to propitiate the Emperor by candour for candour on all other points. Isabella perceived that Marie would find it easier to stand well with him than she herself had done. He was proud of his daughter's distinguished appearance, of her ability and vivacity. Prince Louis of Würtemberg, finding himself relegated to the position of an unsuccessful suitor, had gone a-wooing in Dresden. When Albert of Saxony revisited Vienna in 1763, he had reason to hope that Marie was no longer indifferent to him, but unfortunately the Emperor seemed bent on marrying her to her cousin, the Duke de Chablais, son of the King of Sardinia. Maria Theresa was more inclined to the match that gave promise of happiness. She promoted Albert to the rank of general, and gave him command of a division of the troops quartered in Hungary.

Though Francis had little ado with the business of the State, he was continuously associated with the lighter side of his consort's life. Both retained their interest in the events of the musical world. The year 1762 had scarcely dawned when they heard how all Munich had been excited over the marvellous clavier-playing of a girl of ten and a boy of six, the children of Ludwig Mozart, choirmaster of the Bishop of Salzburg. After a brief stay in the Bavarian capital they returned to their mountain-home. In the following September it was announced that they had arrived in Vienna. From the very outset the city justified its reputation as a haunt of musicians. The Customs officer examined with interest the tiny fiddle carried by Wolfgang Mozart. The boy's ready response to a request for a tune, and his astounding command of the instrument, ended in the admission of the family luggage free of duty. Ludwig Mozart was speedily commanded to bring his son and daughter to Schönbrunn. Their playing exceeded all expectation. Time after time they were summoned to Court.

Vienna was as enthusiastic as Munich had been about the gifted but quite unspoiled children, with their pretty faces and ways and quaint little Court dresses, which had been presented to them by the Empress. "All the ladies were in love with the boy"; but the boy had his own preferences. In the motherly Empress, he at once recognized a friend. Climbing on to her lap, he threw his arms round her neck and kissed her. Sometimes she held him on her knee while he played, the Emperor standing by to watch the agile fingers of the child whom he called his "little magician," and for whom he was always inventing tests of skill. "True art," said Francis in a teasing mood, "is to play with the keyboard covered." Wolfgang assented to the covering of the keys, and then played with all his usual verve and firmness, a *tour de force* often repeated at His Majesty's request. When the concert was over, the small prodigy was allowed to share the amusements of the younger members of the Imperial household. In the course of some game he slipped and fell on the polished floor. When the little Archduchess Antoinette helped him on to his feet, he gratefully offered to marry her. Strange momentary association of two children of destiny: the one called to vindicate his genius as a composer in the teeth of poverty, envy, and prejudice; the other chosen for a marriage which was to be her passport to a throne, a prison, and a scaffold.

Mozart naturally took to the girl nearest his own age in the younger quartet of princesses. Her three slightly older sisters were also bright, happy-dispositioned children. During the preceding summer, Maria Theresa had written to their Governess, congratulating her on the marked improvement in the twelve-year-old Joanna. "The Emperor is delighted with her," says her mother, "and I am also entirely satisfied with her progress." She was already spoken of as the future bride of Ferdinand of the Two Sicilies, who had been established on the throne of Naples when his father succeeded to that of Spain. But the late autumn was often an unhealthy period in the Danube valley. Shortly after the departure of the youthful musicians, Joanna was seized with fever, evidently typhus, and her strength ebbed rapidly. When the New Year began, there was another empty place in the family circle. "She never caused me grief till I grieved for her loss," said the sorrow-stricken mother.

Joanna's sister-in-law kept herself minutely informed of what took place in the sick-room, and sent full reports to Marie, who was apparently in Schönbrunn. The letters tell of the writer's regret that she could not change places with one whose love of life was so much stronger than her own. Isabella escaped the fever, but had a sharp attack of illness a few months afterwards. Her expressed conviction that she would not survive the current year did not tend to allay anxiety. She recovered, however, not a little to her own surprise, and much to the joy of every one else.

In a country once more at peace, Maria Theresa saw her way to a fuller development of various schemes of reform, which had begun to interest her before the outbreak of the last war. She was happy in the renewal of intercourse with the daughter-in-law who could bring a vigorous and practical understanding to bear on difficult questions, and happy also in the hope of a second grandchild. All went well till the trying month of November, when there were rumours of a new outbreak of infectious disease in the city. On the 19th, Isabella became suddenly and alarmingly ill. Her husband watched by her day and night. Her mother-in-law was half frantic with grief when advised to abstain from any visit to the patient. The Emperor, with his divided allegiance, was no longer capable of giving to his consort all the sympathy and support she needed. In her hour of agony she turned once more to the elderly invalid who had been her guardian as long as health and strength lasted. "My dear Tarouca," she writes, "I am so overwhelmed with anxiety that there is no room for any other feeling. Yet it is a relief to pour out my sorrow to my friends. The Archduchess has just been bled. The talk is still of a rheumatic seizure, but all the symptoms point to smallpox. Judge of my state of mind. How I tremble for the dear mother and her infant. She is not strong at the best, and there would have been a certain amount of anxiety in normal circumstances. Think what it means to me to be kept away from her. At my suggestion Van Swieten is acting in concert with De Haen. God grant that by their united efforts the happy union may be prolonged. Marie is very ill too, and Antoinette had a convulsive attack and was unconscious for an hour."

Maria Theresa was saved from continued anxiety about her children, but Van Swieten could give her no comfort with regard to the daughter-in-law whom she loved as much as, if not more than, her own daughters. Isabella was undoubtedly suffering from smallpox, complicated on the third day by the premature birth of an infant girl, who only lived a few hours. The mother revived slightly and Joseph, hoping against hope, was the most devoted of her nurses. But his vigilance could not stay the approach of his dreaded rival. Nine days after the illness had declared itself, he was supporting his wife in his arms to relieve her troubled breathing, when he was forced to realize that the unequal conflict was over. Isabella had received the fulfilment of her great longing.

To his father-in-law, Joseph wrote on the same, sad day, November 27th, 1763, "I have lost everything. My adored wife, my love, my only friend is gone. . . . You will also grieve for her loss, but think what it means to me. Wounded to the quick, I hardly know if I am still alive. Shall I survive this terrible separation? I fear the answer must be yes; but there can be no more happiness for me while life endures."

Another letter from the sorrowing Prince to the Duke of Parma, written a fortnight later, leaves no room for doubt that his married life had been an ideal comradeship. "The only thing that comforts me is to be alone in my room, where I can gaze at the portrait of my beloved wife and handle her writings and other possessions. Often I seem to see her so clearly that I speak to her and feel less lonely. When she withdraws herself again and I can perceive nothing, imagine my despair. I gather up and treasure every scrap of her writing. I would like to show the world what a helpmate I had in her, how truly she deserves to be mourned. What rest I have enjoyed in my own home, with my wife's arms round me. When I had to leave her, what happiness it was to come back. Our joys and sorrows have been honestly shared, and the days together were full of brightness. Who can measure the greatness of the loss for the State, for our whole family, and for my unhappy self? No one can take her place. There is no princess, no woman like her. To me this treasure was given; I have lost her, and I am only twenty-two."

CHAPTER XXV

JOSEPH'S CORONATION AS KING OF THE ROMANS

IN the Imperial household, so suddenly bereft of its most winsome and brilliant member, there was the sympathy of fellow-mourners for the desolate heir to the throne. In other Courts the prevailing feeling was not compassion, but a desire to make the tragic occurrence subserve the purpose of this or that ambitious ruler. Every potentate in Europe seemed to have a daughter, a sister, or a niece for whom he coveted the position of Empress-Designate. When the Peace of Hubertsburg did away with the chief hindrance to the Archduke's election as King of the Romans, namely, the opposition of Prussia, Maria Theresa hoped that the matter would be settled out of hand. But Charles Theodore, of the Palatinate, was an adept at driving a bargain, and much time was consumed ere the Austrian Government effected the compromise which secured the last Electoral vote.[1] It was too late then for Joseph to enjoy the sole pleasure he had promised himself from his new dignity, the power to bestow on his wife the title of queen.

Mutual sorrow had strengthened the bond between the Archduke and his mother. Left to herself, she would have deferred to a more convenient season the discussion of questions with regard to her son's future. But she could not evade the importunate marriage-brokers, who persisted in offering her daughters-in-law. The Saxon Court was zealous for its Princess Kunigunda, the Elector of Bavaria for his sister Josepha. The Duke of Orleans suggested his daughter. Count Silva-Tarouca was requested by the Portuguese Government to exhibit the likeness of a pretty princess of the House of Braganza. Her Majesty's maternal relatives recommended Elizabeth of Brunswick, albeit she was already bespoken for the nephew and heir of Frederick the Great. Another niece of Frederick, Princess Wilhelmina of Prussia, was likewise mentioned. Before the "drear-nighted December" of 1763 was at an end, the first desecrating overtures had been made. Joseph, still reliving the happy past, and asking only to be left alone until he could piece together the fragments of his broken life, was ruthlessly dragged from his seclusion and subjected to the unspeakable torture of having to contemplate a second marriage.

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[1] An emperor was elected by a majority, a King of the Romans by a unanimous vote.

At the first hint of what was impending he wrote to his father-in-law: "I have known the greatest of all bereavements, the most crushing of sorrows, but further suffering still awaits me by reason of my wretched trade. I shall not be allowed to give the fidelity of a lifetime to the wife who still possesses my whole heart."

Though prepared for his doom, Joseph was not prepared for the shortness of his respite. He was justified in expecting that the intrusive negotiators would receive no immediate encouragement. They were only told that nothing would be decided till after the Prince's journey to Frankfort, a journey fixed for the month of March.

It is impossible to exonerate from a charge of cruelty the parents who permitted themselves to be so speedily diverted from the human to the political aspect of the situation. Francis is the more excusable. There was nothing strained in his relations with his eldest son, but neither was there any intimacy between them. The Emperor's conduct exposed him to criticism, and Joseph, who had his full share of youthful intolerance, summed up his father as "an idler surrounded by flatterers." Unfilial remarks, duly retailed by Court gossips, did not make for unbroken harmony. Francis had done much to promote the interests of his children, and he was quick to feel and resent any lack of appreciation. It is doubtful if Isabella, for all her wariness, succeeded in hoodwinking him as to her preference for his consort. At all events, he did not find it jarring to imagine another daughter-in-law in her stead.

But Maria Theresa, with her higher conception of wedlock, and her own heartache to serve as a clue to her son's feelings, ought to have known that to hurry him into a conventional union was nothing more nor less than a crime against nature, with every risk of nature's vengeance. In all probability she did know, and this was one of the occasions when, in place of trusting to her own power of intuition, she listened to the arguments of Kaunitz and the arguments of her husband to the hopeless warping of her judgment.

Even Archduchess Marie made no attempt to plead the cause of her unhappy brother. A common sorrow had drawn her very near to the Empress, but her confidences to Prince Albert of Saxony show that she was under the extraordinary delusion that Joseph's loss was not so great as he believed it to be. In her ignorance of life the Archduchess discounted Isabella's love for her husband because, forsooth, it had not the surface-glow of the love for herself.

Thus when Maria Theresa began to examine the claims of the several nominees, the eyes of her understanding were so thoroughly darkened that she imagined herself about to restore her son's lost interest in life, when she was literally preparing to sacrifice him and another hapless victim to the Moloch of the State.

She could not endure the idea of a marriage tie between the House of Austria and that of Prussia. The Princess of Brunswick was a distant relative of her own, but she was also a niece of Frederick, and had been brought up as a Protestant. An Orleans marriage offered no diplomatic advantage. The Princess of Portugal was undeniably good-looking, but it was a serious drawback that the first article of her political creed was the necessity of friendship with England. Kaunitz maintained that a commingling of interests with Saxony or Bavaria would be of supreme importance to the monarchy. It was tantalizing that Kunigunda and Josepha were both so ill-favoured that there was small chance of the Archduke taking to either of them. The only young princess his mother could think of, who combined physical charm with the requisite political and religious bias, was Marie Louise of Spain, the promised wife of Leopold. The Imperial matchmaker was confident that, if the idea of a union with the Infanta were to commend itself to the King of the Romans, Charles III would consent to an alteration of his daughter's destiny. If proof were needed of Maria Theresa's affection for her firstborn son, it might be found in the formulation of a plan which, had it been carried out, would have involved her in all the labour and anxiety of a complete readjustment of her matrimonial pawns.

But it was impossible to take definite steps while Joseph deprecated any attempt to make him the supplanter of his brother and refused to listen to alternative proposals. His passionate protest that he could not even think of himself as a widower, and that to be outwardly joined to another wife would be a very climax of misery, might have given pause to the misguided votaries of the State. Unfortunately it made no impression on Kaunitz. If Maria Theresa herself were in trouble or danger, he was undoubtedly sympathetic; but sentiment was rigorously excluded from his dealings with other public characters. He regarded the Crown Prince's impending journey through Bavaria as an opportunity to be utilized by advocates of a matrimonial connection with the House of Wittelsbach.

On March 14th, 1764, the candidate for kingship, accompanied by his father and his brother Leopold, left Vienna for Frankfort. The impressive scenes of nineteen years before were to be re-enacted, for the ceremonial was the same whether the central figure were an emperor or a King of the Romans and, as such, prospective Emperor. But the reluctant departure of Joseph was a complete contrast to the joyous setting forth of Francis in 1745. The forthcoming election would be, like the previous one, a victory for Maria Theresa. In the person of a born Habsburg it would reknit the ancient bond of union between Austria and the Empire. In other circumstances Her Majesty would not have foregone her share in the celebrations, but the Court was still ostensibly in mourning, and she remained in Vienna.

In imagination, however, she followed the travellers from stage to stage, and found time for letter upon letter to her husband and Joseph. The latter, nurtured in the traditions of royalty, could discriminate between the mother who loved him and the monarch who was bent on exacting a sacrifice from which he recoiled in every fibre of his being. As for the election at Frankfort, the occasion of so much congratulation, it seemed to the predestined king a very apple of Sodom. In his happier days he might still have stigmatized the attendant ceremonies as "useless and wearisome," but how different it would have been with Isabella to agree with him, to reaffirm her own conviction that formalities of State were an utter waste of time. When all was said and done, they would certainly have found much to interest and amuse them in an excursion into the Middle Ages.

The Frankfort festivities of 1764 are described in detail in Goethe's autobiography. As the son of an influential burgher, the lad of sixteen had exceptional opportunities of seeing all that took place. Spectators who had witnessed the pageantry of 1745 indulged in reminiscences, in which the young Maria Theresa and her consort figured pleasantly. The speakers were emphatic in their preference for the earlier celebrations. In what was passing before their eyes they found "a lack of human interest and passionate sympathy."

It is not for the spectator of a later day to condemn the wiseacres of 1764. They judged according to appearances. But Time has contrived a double mirror, whereby the memorable series of pictures can be viewed on both sides. And the human interest becomes all-pervading when we turn from the vivid narrative of Goethe to Joseph's correspondence with his mother.

A few brief extracts will suffice to show how suffering and sympathy had brought two strong-willed, independent characters very close to one another. The frankness and informality of the Archduke's letters testify to the expansion of his nature during three years' fellowship with a kindred spirit. If only it had not become instinctive with Maria Theresa to put claims of State before personal feeling, she would surely have discerned that the needs of the dynasty were not half so urgent as the need of preventing Joseph from being again driven in upon himself.

Even as it was, he dreaded lest his preoccupation with one subject should make him burdensome to his correspondent. His first despairing messages seemed to call for apology; but he continues: "I could not open my heart to any one save to a mother so tender, so loving, so pitiful of my sorrow. There is a measure of distraction in the sight of a hundred things that are new to me, but beneath it all is the constant sense of my terrible loss."

Passing through Bavaria, the travellers were entertained by Elector Maximilian. He made no secret of his desire for nearer relationship with the Imperial Family. Unluckily, as it afterwards proved, Princess Josepha was not visible. Her brother made the most of her good qualities, but the most obliging of Court painters could not conceal her plainness of feature. "Certainly not here," was Joseph's significant remark in a letter from the electorate; but he goes on to say: "Unless it be as a proof of love to you, dear mother, I will never marry again. These recent days have brought a cruel tearing open of my wound. The image of my adorable wife is so deeply graven on my heart that at every moment it seems as if she might return to me. When a courier is announced I find myself half expecting news of her. And to think all that is at an end. If I tell you that my tears are falling as I write these words, you will know the exceeding greatness of my sorrow."

Frankfort, meanwhile, was getting more and more excited over the imminent arrival of its Imperial guests. Goethe, with interest divided between boyish curiosity to see and hear all that was going on, and a first experiment in love-making, with Gretchen as heroine, exulted because "the latter part of March was so rich in festivals." And the cause of all the commotion, little more than a boy in years, though with a man's experience of suffering, regarded those same festivals as a veritable form of martyrdom. "My present life," he tells his mother, "is one long, violent effort. With a heart aching with grief I have to appear delighted with a position of which I feel all the responsibility and none of the pleasure. I, with my longing for solitude, with my difficulty in being at ease with people whom I do not really know, have to be always in company with others, and ready to start a conversation with every chance stranger. Think of me, with my limited command of words at the best of times, having to chatter and pay compliments the whole day long. I assure you that when at last I reach my own apartments my head seems to be going round. But to merit your approval I can make light of the difficulties. Be sure that everything will be satisfactorily accomplished."

And, indeed, no one looking on could detect any flaw in the order of procedure. "All the people," says Goethe, "were well disposed to the Habsburg prince by reason of his handsome, youthful form, and the hopes universally set on one who was the reputed possessor of great qualities."

So there was cheering when the foregone result of the election was announced, and more acclamation when the King of the Romans made his entry into Frankfort, and on the day of his installation. "I will do my best," he wrote, "to prevent any regret on the part of those who rejoiced over taking me as their future leader." No thought of gladness was possible for himself. "My election took place on March 27th, four months to a day since the departure of that dear spirit. On the 29th it was four months since I was separated from all of her that was mortal, and that was the date of my public entry. The difference it would have made if these ceremonies had been graced by the presence of my Queen. Forgive me, my very dear mother, if I grieve you by my words. But have pity on a son who is fondly attached to you, and who is on the verge of despair. You tell me that in spirit you are in Frankfort. I assure you my spirit is in Vienna or wherever you happen to be."

Certainly no trace of grief or despair was manifest to the cheering multitude. Goethe, from his vantage-point on the stairway of the banqueting-hall, caught Joseph's look of amusement at the incongruity of his own and his father's attire. Francis was by far the more dignified figure. He wore the unofficial Imperial robe of purple silk, with decorations of pearls and precious stones. It was remarked that he moved with the easy grace habitual to him. "The young King, on the contrary, in his outlandish garments, with the crown jewels of Charlemagne, dragged himself along as if conscious of his disguise. . . . The crown, which had required a great deal of padding, stood out from his head like an overhanging roof." There was room for criticism, even for ridicule. But the citizens had already seen and admired Joseph in his ordinary robes of state. They did not, therefore, find fault because his slight form was ill-adapted for an impressive display of the trappings of empire. The sole ground of complaint was that suggested by the older burghers, that the whole affair was wanting in human interest.

CHAPTER XXVI

THE SECOND MARRIAGE OF JOSEPH

AFTER the coronation Joseph had to give a week to the task of getting to know the assembled dignitaries. So fair an opportunity of establishing a personal claim to their goodwill was unlikely to recur. His heart sank as he realized that they, too, had an interest in his matrimonial prospects. The ecclesiastical Elector of Cologne represented to the young Prince that the Empire, which had given him the reversion of its crown, expected him to select a consort with a view to the maintenance of peace. To this end, and also because of her fitness to shine in public and private, a union with Elizabeth of Brunswick-Wolfenbüttel would be eminently desirable. It would form a link between Catholics and Protestants, between the partisans of Austria and those of Prussia. His Majesty might take it on the word of a Churchman that there was no serious obstacle. The Princess was not yet formally betrothed to the Crown Prince of Prussia.

The Elector's words were duly reported in Joseph's next letter to Vienna. The sacrilegious aspect of the question was increasingly manifest to himself, but it was vain to dream of exemption from the penalties of kingship. To his mother he wrote: "If I were not so entirely devoted to you, and if my short experience of life had not afforded me some insight into the ways of the world, I would choose to remain a widower, or rather eternally bound to my beautiful angel, for I have not taken back the vow of fidelity I swore to her at the altar. . . . I assure you it is a bitter struggle between my longing to conform to your wishes and my own inclination, conviction, my sense of propriety. I foresee that my attachment to you will decide the issue. God grant that it may not be my undoing, here and hereafter."

The Elector of Cologne may have been right in his surmise that Elizabeth of Brunswick was the only princess in Europe who would prove a successful Queen of the Romans; but Maria Theresa would not look in the direction of a kinswoman of Frederick II. Her letters still told of her fervent desire to obtain the hand of the Infanta for her new king. Great was her disappointment when he bespoke her intervention with Charles of Spain for a very different purpose.

Though Joseph had found his chief solace in unreserved intercourse with his mother, he had also come to depend very much on the sympathy and counsel of his father-in-law. The fate from which he shrank seemed more intolerable than ever when he reflected that it might cut him off from the free outpouring of thought and feeling to Philip of Parma. It occurred to him, therefore, that, if he must needs take some one to wife, existence would be more endurable if the bride were Louise of Parma, Isabella's only sister. She was but a girl of fourteen, and could not be married immediately, but that was all the better. Joseph would gain the interval he craved in order to reconcile himself to his changed circumstances.

He was aggrieved when his mother besought him to renounce a plan which had no chance of success. Princess Louise was already betrothed to her cousin, the Prince of Asturias, and the Empress could see no reason why the King of Spain should forego his intentions with regard to his eldest son. Yet when Joseph insisted that her diplomatic skill could achieve the unlikely, and that, so far as he was concerned, the choice lay between Louise and nobody, the Empress agreed to make the required attempt. The answer from Madrid was precisely what she had expected. Charles III declined to annul the existing engagement and, having failed to obtain his prospective daughter-in-law, it was manifestly impossible to ask the King for his own daughter as a second-best bride.

Joseph, driven from his last refuge and unnerved by the excessive demands which had been made upon him, professed utter indifference as to whom he married provided his mother were satisfied. Nevertheless, he was dismayed to learn that his parents had begun to think seriously of those unprepossessing ladies of Saxony and Bavaria. Though he made no comment, his intellect assented when the Emperor and Kaunitz proved from the history of the reign that friendship with Bavaria was almost vital to the integrity of Austria. Besides, the Elector Maximilian had no direct heir, and was likely to inherit certain allodial estates in Bohemia and the Palatinate. The marriage contract of his sister might be so drawn up as to convey to her descendants a considerable portion of this transferable property. Francis inclined to favour a marriage between his son and Princess Josepha.

Maria Theresa, on the contrary, was more bent on showing goodwill to the Electoral Family of Saxony. Her attitude towards the disputed Polish Succession was causing grievous disappointment at the Court of Dresden. Augustus III had died in October, 1763. His eldest son, a lifelong invalid, survived him only two months. The widow of the latter Prince, Maria Antonia of Bavaria, was a very competent guardian of her children's rights. There was no difficulty about her son's succession to the electorate; but it was idle to fancy that a boy of twelve would be suffered to perpetuate the Saxon dynasty in Poland. Catherine II declared in favour of a national king, and then set herself to secure the election of Stanislaus Poniatowski, a relative of the Russianized Czartoriski family. He was opposed by a genuinely national party, whose candidate was the Grand-General Branicki. The Electress of Saxony entreated the Austrian Government to support Branicki. His advanced age made it unlikely that his reign would be prolonged. By the time it was over the youthful Elector would doubtless be an eligible claimant of his grandfather's throne. As a possible alternative Maria Antonia suggested the immediate candidature of one of her brothers-in-law.

"Austria strongly approved of the presence of the Saxon dynasty at Warsaw. Her interests were best served when the Polish throne was occupied by a prince independent of Russia and not over friendly with Prussia. Could Maria Theresa have been persuaded to take a side, and, if necessary, have recourse to arms, it might have been possible by supporting Branicki, or Prince Xavier of Saxony, to avoid the threatened extension of Russian influence. . . . But the years of anxiety through which she had passed, and the sufferings to which she had seen her people subjected, had excited in her such a detestation of war that her whole policy was governed by a fixed determination to avoid it."[1] Since she was not prepared forcibly to uphold the Polish Nationalists, her protest against Russian interference with the election was perfectly futile. When the Emperor and the King of the Romans returned from Frankfort in the spring of 1764, the election of Stanislaus could easily be predicted. By the month of August it was an accomplished fact.

The Electress was naturally distressed that the sceptre of Poland should pass so completely from the Saxon dynasty. But there was nothing to be gained by falling out with Maria Theresa, whose son was apparently going to marry either her sister or her sister-in-law. The latter seemed for a while to have the better chance of becoming Queen of the Romans. True, the Empress was no more successful than her husband and Kaunitz had been in extorting any expression of preference from Joseph. With entire personal unconcern he listened to her homilies on duty and matrimony and Saxony, merely reiterating his desire that her will should be his law. His failure to connect himself more closely with the Duke of Parma had not interrupted their familiar correspondence, but there is a pitiful change in the tone of the younger man's letters. The vision of a love stronger than death is less clearly perceived than hitherto, and the prevailing mood is either apathy or recklessness. Thus he writes: "As I have not been able to combine solid advantage with what would have been congenial to myself, I am forced to decide for solids pure and simple. I am assured by their Majesties, who have made searching inquiries, that Princess Kunigunda of Saxony possesses a well-developed and fundamentally solid character. She has virtues, but no trace of the brilliancy in which I have been wont to find my delight. She is said to be capable of taking a sane view of things in general, to be gentle in manner, and used to get on well with a big family. These qualities ought to content a man who is only marrying from a sense of obligation, and who asks from his yoke-fellow nothing more than to be left in peace. The outward appearance of the Princess is not belauded, and though I might be philosophic enough to disregard this, their Majesties, out of their affection and consideration for me, desire that I should see her before binding myself in any way. Accordingly, on the 6th of October, I am going with my brother to Prague and thence to Teplitz, where I shall meet the Electress and the Princess of Saxony. As I have only to pass judgment on what meets the eye, I do not propose to stay more than four-and-twenty hours."

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[1] Bright, *Joseph II*, p. 2.

At the Court of Dresden Kunigunda was deservedly popular. Given fair play she could even make her associates forget her homeliness of feature and scragginess of figure. At Teplitz, where she was looked at as if she had been an animal for sale, her real nature was undiscerned. Joseph, on his return to Vienna, reported that she was singularly unseductive, but that he would marry her if that was the wish of his parents. They replied that he had better leave the subject in abeyance till he had seen the Princess of Bavaria. The new tour was arranged, but it was a merciless description of Josepha that the Prince dispatched to his father-in-law. "Her age is six-and-twenty. She has never had smallpox, and the very thought of the disease makes me shudder. Her figure is short, thick-set, and without a vestige of youthful charm. Her face is covered with spots and pimples, and her teeth are horrible. If I were left to myself, she could never tempt me into a relationship in which I have known the very opposite of all this. I have put the matter plainly before their Majesties, and implored them in the very difficult circumstances to decide what I should do."

Surely it was time to make an end of a cruel and degrading farce. The Empress and her son, each wanting to satisfy the other, had become hopelessly confused as to their respective motives. "I am persuaded," says Joseph, "that the political considerations are not worth the sacrifice; but who can resist the promptings of filial affection, especially for a mother so dear, so worthy of all reverence?"

And, it might be added, so lacking in imaginative insight that she could not perceive her son's unfitness to come to any immediate decision as to his future. If she had even followed her own impulse and insisted on the Saxon alliance, she would have brought less suffering on her victim and herself. But again she hesitated, while it may be inferred that the Emperor was more explicit. Joseph asserts that he was given to understand that his marriage with the Bavarian Princess would be a popular step, and that therefore both parents desired her to have the preference. This was clearly a mistake. To Marie, absent at the moment, the Empress announced the engagement by writing: "You are to have a sister-in-law, and I a daughter-in-law. Unfortunately it is Princess Josepha. It went against the grain to have anything to do with a settlement without my son's co-operation. But neither to me alone, nor to the Emperor, nor to Kaunitz, would he express any preference. . . . The worst of it is that we must pretend to be pleased and happy. My head and my heart are not at one on this subject, and it is difficult to retain my equanimity."

On January 25th, 1765, the travesty of a marriage was celebrated at Schönbrunn. Festivities of every description served to keep up appearances. Union with the daughter of "The Bold Bavarian" had at least saved Joseph from a new father-in-law. Four weeks after the wedding he resumed his correspondence with the Duke of Parma. It was the one relief of the tortured spirit. "Pestered," he says, "with a constant round of what people call pleasure and entertainment, I have hardly a moment to myself. Yet I must make time to write to you, for almost the only happiness left to me is that of easing my mind to my dear friend and the honoured father of the loved one who has gone from my sight, but is still enthroned within my heart. Oh, what a difference now, and how miserably I misjudged myself. I thought I was strong enough to refrain from comparisons and subdue the inevitable feeling of revulsion. But human weakness has got the upper hand with me, and I will not conceal from you that I am utterly wretched. I have an irreproachable wife who loves me, whom I esteem by reason of her good qualities. But because I know what it is to worship my wife, I feel sorry for this princess whom I cannot pretend to love. It is useless to reason with oneself where the outgoings of the heart are concerned, and yet it is so contrary to my nature to play the hypocrite. You, my father, who understand what is meant by refinement of thought, will comprehend that it is less on my own account than from an honourable feeling for her that I find it terrible to be loved and unable to make any genuine response. I will keep to the path of honour, and if I cannot be an affectionate husband, at least she will have in me a friend who will appreciate her good points, and treat her with every imaginable consideration."

Alas for the weakness of human nature! Joseph failed to compass even this minor degree of friendship. Embarrassed by his wife's ill-advised display of emotion, he withdrew into an inner world of his own. Her well-being became to him a matter of profound indifference. He had not even the grace to spare her when the spirit of mockery took possession of him.

Yet the dignity with which she comported herself in her trying position might have provoked involuntary admiration. At first it seemed as if no place could be found for her in the family circle. The Empress, like her son, made comparisons, and there was no warmth in her attentions. Amongst her sisters-in-law Josepha had no friend. Marianne, the privileged invalid, was usually in her own fenced-off apartments. Marie deliberately kept the newcomer at arm's length. Elizabeth, the loveliest of all the sisters, was not the most responsive of companions. As her mother scathingly remarked: "It mattered not if the look of admiration came from a prince or a Swiss guard, as long as some one was doing homage to her beauty, Elizabeth was satisfied." Amelia could be kindly when she chose, but she was a creature of moods, and generally in disgrace with her mother on account of her laziness. Though Josepha was fond of children, she had little intercourse with the younger members of the household. She would have tried to win the affection of her stepdaughter, but since the death of Little Theresa's mother Marie had cared for the child as if she had been her own, and she would brook no interference in that quarter. During the first months of her married life the unfortunate Queen had but one friend at the Austrian Court, and that was the Emperor. Moved partly by pity for her loneliness, partly by a sense of responsibility for her being there at all, Francis took pains to give her an assurance of protection and kindly interest. He was touched by the grateful and quite uncritical affection which he received in return. It was the solitary instance in which Josepha had a slight advantage over her gifted predecessor.

CHAPTER XXVII

THE MARRIAGE OF LEOPOLD AND DEATH OF THE EMPEROR FRANCIS

UNABLE to take to her new daughter-in-law, Maria Theresa fell to dreaming of what might have been with the Infanta in the part of Queen of the Romans. Yet she had no sure ground for supposing that her cherished idea would at any time have found favour with the King of Spain. He showed not the slightest inclination for a change of son-in-law. More than once during Joseph's widowhood, he pressed for an early marriage between his daughter, then in her nineteenth year, and Leopold. The Empress naturally sought to delay the event as long as possible. In Archduke Charles the Princess would have had a husband who numbered more months than herself, but she was a year and a half older than Leopold. It was finally settled that the wedding should take place in the summer of 1765, when the bridegroom would be eighteen.

The Infanta's imagination had evidently been fired by reports of the festive side of the Austro-Bavarian alliance. Her father came to the conclusion that, if she were made much of in Vienna, she would take ill with the humdrum life of the Tuscan Court. He therefore stipulated that she should be married at some provinical city and go straight to Florence. It was decided that for a bride landing at Genoa and returning to Italy a week or two later, the most convenient rendezvous would be Innsbruck, the capital of Tyrol.

The civil governor of the province, Count Enzenberg, had married one of Maria Theresa's favourite ladies-in-waiting. Hence the confidential tone of the letters in which the Empress gives directions for the lodging and entertainment of the troops of visitors who would presently converge on the little Alpine town. She urges the need of foresight with regard to provisions. On no account would she have her Tyrolese subjects associate her presence with a rise in the price of food.

A new gateway in the form of a triumphal arch was to be a feature of the preparations at Innsbruck. "I hear," writes the Empress, "that you propose to build it of stone. That is well, for then it will serve as a lasting memorial of the occasion. I will send you a sketch of the sort of thing I would like. I saw a most satisfactory arch at Waizen, very simple and quite in the Roman style. The Innsbruck one must be very high. It might be illuminated on three evenings—in honour of our arrival, of the coming of the bride, and again on the wedding-night." As an adjunct to the predominantly mediæval Innsbruck of 1765, the pretentious classic arch, in all its hideous newness, must have been a still more incongruous object than it is at the present day.

By the month of March arrangements were so far advanced that Maria Theresa wrote to Countess Enzenberg: "The next dispatch from Spain will settle the time of our coming. I think it will be early in July. We want to be in residence a few days before the arrival of the Princess, and we think of staying till the 2nd or 9th of September. . . I look forward to seeing you. I need a little comforting, for I am weary and depressed—not without reason. Love me always, and believe me always yours."

On June 24th the Infanta sailed from Cartagena. About the same date the Empress informed her Innsbruck friend that the Imperial travellers would set out on July 4th. With obvious relief it was announced that the Queen of the Romans was out of health and would remain in Vienna. "I am willing to believe in her goodness," adds her mother-in-law, "but she is neither pretty nor very agreeable."

At forty-eight Maria Theresa viewed the approach of summer with the same apprehension as in her girlhood. "I am simply dreading the heat," she says. To avoid journeying at midday, she arranged to leave the Hofburg at four in the morning. The Emperor had not the same partiality for early starts, neither did he care to be hurried in taking leave of the seven children who were staying behind. When seated in his carriage he still delayed the signal for departure, and ordered an attendant to bring the Archduchess Antoinette. In after years she used to recall how, as a girl of nine, she had been hastily lifted into the Imperial chariot for a last embrace from the father whom she was never to see again.

Despite the early hour, the streets were lined with enthusiastic spectators who cheered the travellers as they proceeded, first to St. Stephen's to hear Mass, and thence to the city boundary. Accompanying the Emperor and Empress were the bridegroom, his brother Joseph, his sisters Marianne and Marie, and his uncle and aunt, Prince Charles and Princess Charlotte of Lorraine. Kaunitz, who on the occasion of Joseph's second marriage had been advanced to the rank of Prince of the Empire, was in attendance on their Majesties, together with other holders of State offices, and a seemingly endless retinue. It was, in fact, an exodus of the entire Court.

Innsbruck was reached on July 15th. There the Imperial party was joined by a guest specially invited by the Emperor. It was the Duke de Chablais, son of the King of Sardinia and the elder sister of Francis. Every one knew with what intention the meeting had been brought about. To Archduchess Marie the thought of marrying any one but Prince Albert of Saxony was revolting. They had had opportunities of seeing each other when the Court was resident in Pressburg, and the devotion was no longer one-sided. At the first hint of what was in contemplation, Marie implored her mother to save her from the misery of union with this unknown cousin. The situation appealed to the Empress. She was frankly sympathetic, but declined to intervene before the departure for Innsbruck. As she sagely remarked, opposition at an early stage would confirm the Emperor in his determination, while it was possible that he might change his mind when he had seen his nephew. However, she did not propose to let the Duke de Chablais have the field to himself. Albert was also invited to Innsbruck. Prince Clement of Saxony, now a full-fledged bishop, was to be the chief celebrant at the marriage.

The brothers were amongst the earlier arrivals in Tyrol and took part in the welcome of the Emperor, Empress, and bridegroom.

There was, however, no news of the bride. For three weeks, Leopold's former Governor, Count Thurn, had been waiting at Genoa with an Austrian suite for the Infanta. To Genoa came also Louise of Parma, who was to proceed to Madrid with her cousin's returning escort. She was a very sad and lonely young princess; for the father, in whose companionship she had left Parma, had been taken ill on the journey. At Alessandria it was found that the Duke was in the first stage of smallpox. His daughter was hurried on to the coast. The Spanish flotilla, delayed by storms, did not put into port till July 18th. Then the girls who were exchanging countries, spent a few days together, sorrowful days at the last. For word came from Alessandria of the death of the Duke of Parma.

At Innsbruck, too, the unexpected news caused deep regret. Both Emperor and Empress had been warmly attached to Don Philip. But their sense of loss was nothing to that of Joseph, who had been deprived of the sole means of escape from the isolation of his inward life.

On July 30th, the Emperor and Leopold set out for Botzen to meet the long-looked-for bride. Three days later they accompanied her into the Tyrolese capital, duly passing under the triumphal arch. With this daughter-in-law, Maria Theresa was entirely satisfied. Her first impressions were recorded for the benefit of the Electress of Saxony. "The Infanta has a dazzling complexion, with a lovely colour, clear blue eyes, and the most beautiful hair I have seen in my life. She has a very fine figure, in a word, a charming young person, frank, and full of life and good spirits. I am quite taken with her. . . . My happiness might be too perfect if my son's health did not give me subject for anxiety. He has grown prodigiously this last year, and is just like a skeleton. During the journey he also showed signs of fever, which made us very uneasy."

The anxiety increased when it became evident that Leopold had contracted a chill during his absence from Innsbruck. On the wedding-day he was so far from well that it was with difficulty he got through his part in the ceremony. When it was over, he had to be carried from the chapel to bed. The illness seems to have been pleurisy, and for several days he was in a very critical condition. He had only reached the first stage of convalescence, and his mother was beginning to breathe more freely, when she was suddenly called to the endurance of a sorrow which overwhelmed her at the time and threw its shadow over all her remaining years.

When it became evident that Leopold would have to reserve all his strength for the journey to Florence, there was no further object in delaying the public celebrations of his marriage. In the absence of the bridegroom, the other members of the Imperial Family redoubled their efforts to ensure the success of the various festivities. On August 18th a special performance at the theatre was to be followed by a supper at the palace. The Emperor had complained of illness during the previous night, but, feeling better in the morning, he rose as usual and fulfilled the engagements for the day. To obtain a brief rest between the evening functions, he left the theatre before the close of the performance. He had come to the end of the corridor between the playhouse and the residence, when a return of the distressing symptoms of the night before made him glad to lean back in the angle of a doorway. Joseph, his only companion, proposed that he should be seated while the physician was sent for. The Emperor maintained that it was but a temporary feeling of discomfort. He insisted that no alarm should be given, neither would he let his son wait for him. The latter withdrew, but kept his father in sight, and was ready to rush to his assistance when, after taking a few steps, Francis seemed on the point of falling. There was no further delay in summoning help. Doctors and confessor were on the spot immediately. The Emperor was carried into a little anteroom and every effort was made to restore consciousness. But there was no rally from the apoplectic seizure, no sign of life from the moment when he fell back into the arms of his son.

Joseph's first thought was of his mother; but scarcely had the fatal truth been realized when the Empress entered the room. Her inquiries about the commotion in the palace had elicited that something had happened to the Emperor, and she had hurried to the spot. She was prepared for alarming illness, but not for the blow that struck at the very root of her being. Stunned by its suddenness and severity, she knelt at her husband's side, dry-eyed, inarticulate, incapable of movement till for her own sake she was led away almost by force.

"Never can I forget that evening," writes Prince Albert to the Electress of Saxony. "Think of it; the Emperor dead, the Empress supported to her apartments by her brother- and sister-in-law, who were almost as overcome as herself; the Archduke ill in bed, the Archduchesses prostrate with grief, the guests arriving for the supper and bursting into tears till all the palace seemed to echo with sobs and groans."

No one was suffered to follow the Empress into her room. Alone she forced herself to realize that there was no awaking from what seemed like a terrible dream. She could hardly remember a time when Francis had not held sway in her thoughts and in her heart. It had been her boast that she had loved him since she was six years old. When death had thrown a veil over his failings, she forgot that her whole life had been spent in efforts to please him, and reproached herself bitterly for not having made more of the time together. In the dreary dawn, she bethought herself of something that might still be done. A faithful attendant was keeping watch in the ante-chamber. She was summoned as usual to help with the morning toilet. But there was to be no more elaborate dressing of the still abundant hair. The assistant was bidden to cut it quite short. As she was also deputed to bring her mistress some of the Emperor's hair, we may take it that what Maria Theresa had in view was not so much the widow's demonstration of woe, as a last exchange of love-tokens.

In the course of the morning she asked to see the sons and daughters who were at Innsbruck. They all came—even Leopold, though he was still too weak to walk. Having assured herself that they were not suffering in health, she did not seek to detain them. She had ordered her husband's shroud to be made in her apartments, that it might in part be her own work. In this sorrowful task and in prayers for the departed soul, the first day of widowhood was wholly occupied. She could not be persuaded to issue any order or express any wish whatsoever. Neither would she see her ministers. Thus responsibility of every description devolved on the young man of twenty-four who, by virtue of his recent coronation, became without further formality the Emperor Joseph II.

Two days later Albert of Saxony expresses surprise that "the shock had caused no physical breakdown. Even the Archduke is better. He will leave on the 30th to take possession of the Grand Duchy of Tuscany whereto he now succeeds as Sovereign. The Empress will delay her journey till September 1st, and travel part of the way by water so as not to arrive in Vienna till the 5th. By that time the funeral rites will be over."

There is a touching picture of the widowed Empress when, on the eve of her doleful journey, she appeared for the first time amongst the members of the Court who were still in Tyrol. She noticed at once that one figure was standing apart from the others. It was no longer worth any one's while to curry favour with Princess Auersperg. Her dismissal from Court was generally expected. But having ignored her husband's irregular connections in his lifetime, Maria Theresa was far too loyal to acknowledge any rivalry after his death. Her first words were addressed to the woman whose relations with the Emperor had caused her so much sorrow.

By no one was Francis more sincerely mourned than by his daughter-in-law Josepha, who wrote to her sister: "I do not feel as if I could accept congratulations on my title of Empress. I have received it at too great a cost. If it had depended on me, I would have chosen rather to remain a queen than to survive a father-in-law who loaded me with kindness. I am powerless to express my sense of regret for his loss. He never made any difference between me and his own children, and I loved and honoured him as if he had indeed been my father. His memory is graven on my heart, and my gratitude to him will only cease with my life."

CHAPTER XXVIII

THE NEW CO-REGENCY

LETTERS written by Maria Theresa in the first months of her loneliness recall Bacon's picture of "dispairful widows who wait upon the shores of Death and waft unto him to draw near, wishing above others to see his star, that they might be led to his place." In answer to Tarouca's greeting for the New Year 1766, the Empress writes: "I hardly know myself now, for I have become like an animal with no true life or reasoning power. I forget everything. I get up at five. I go to bed late, and the livelong day I seem to do nothing. I do not even think. It is a terrible state to be in, but I revive a little when I see one of my old acquaintances."

On February 12th, the thirtieth anniversary of her marriage, her thoughts turn to the days in Innsbruck, and she writes to Countess Enzenberg: "A year ago I counted this the happiest day of the twelvemonth. . . . To-day it has been a comfort to me that the date coincided with Ash Wednesday. Ashes—that is my portion. I accept it with submission. I have spent the day of happy memories shut up alone in my private room, surrounded by the portraits of our great and beloved master. As the hours went by my thoughts were busy with my vanished bliss. Bitterly did I regret not to have made more of it while it was mine. Looking back, the thirty years appear to me more like ten, while the five months of my widowhood are like twenty long years. To celebrate the anniversary I am going to give away my wardrobe. The only dress I covet is the garment I shall wear upon my bier. It will signify reunion with the sole object of passionate love that my heart has known in this world. Think of the void in which I find myself now. Surely God must intervene in my lot to provide for the needs of my soul. I require solitude for doing penance and taking thought for my eternal salvation. More than ever do I long for my belovèd Innsbruck. It seems to me that where I lost my peace of mind I might recover it again."

But for the children still dependent on her, Maria Theresa might have obeyed the impulse to abdicate and return to Innsbruck, there to associate herself with her new religious foundation for women of rank. They were to be housed so close to the palace that they could use as an oratory the room in which the Emperor Francis had breathed his last. His wife had had it fitted up as a chapel.

To Kaunitz, who left Tyrol at an earlier date than herself, the Empress had written: "I am extraordinarily grateful to you for all your service and your counsel during the lifetime of our incomparable lord and master. . . . In the dreary future I will follow your advice with the same confidence as in the past. In conformity therewith I am letting myself be dragged back to Vienna, wholly and solely to assume the guardianship of nine orphans. They are greatly to be pitied. Their good father idolized them, and could never refuse them anything. But it will be changed times now. I am exceedingly anxious about their future, which will be decided in the course of next winter. I count upon you, and will do nothing without knowing your mind. I can trust you with the interests of my family as confidently as with the business of the State."

The reference to "next winter" indicates the hope that Francis might have made some testamentary provision for his younger sons and his daughters. The discovery of a will, dated 1751, was a bitter disappointment. The Emperor had left everything to his eldest son, even Tuscany. Fortunately he had afterwards reverted to the original intention of establishing a collateral dynasty in the Grand Duchy, so Leopold's inheritance was secure. "As for the other children," says Maria Theresa, "they are frustrated of everything. I shall have to support them all." She had, however, considerable sums at her disposal. The late Emperor's business faculty had been a source of much profit to his consort, and she was not without hope that Joseph might be persuaded to mend the fortunes of his brothers and sisters in return for the powers she had conferred upon himself.

Within a week of her return to Vienna she had appointed him Grand Master of the orders of merit, and co-Regent of the monarchy. The heads of the several departments of State took the oath to him there and then. In none of the countries concerned was any objection raised, not even in Hungary. True, there was no risk involved, for the Empress-Queen was careful to reserve her right to supremacy in her hereditary dominions. Every formality was complied with before the end of the year, but Joseph's regency had virtually begun at the moment of his father's death.

He did not come as a novice to the task of government. When he was eighteen, Bartenstein, his chief instructor in history and international law, suggested to the Empress the desirability of giving the Crown Prince some practical experience of politics. It was therefore arranged that Joseph should frequent the deliberative councils of the main departments of State—the Chancery (Executive), and the Ministries of Finance, War, and Justice.

The pupil of Bartenstein, of Martini in legal and economic science; of Daun, Laudon, and Lacy in the art of war, was qualified to form opinions on the prevailing system of administration. That he did not at first take kindly to detail is not surprising.

Neither was his interest thoroughly roused when, shortly after his first marriage, he was associated with the new Council of State which Kaunitz had called into existence, to exercise authority over all the divisions of government, and thus do away with the want of cohesion which was the drawback of the system of Haugwitz. The members, nominated by the Crown, were men of experience and approved fidelity, and experts in one or other of the leading branches of public service. Since, with the exception of the Chancellor, they could hold no State appointment concurrently with membership of the Council, they were expected to have a single eye to the interests of the monarchy as a whole. In January, 1761, the Emperor and Empress presided at the first sitting of the Council. From the following May onwards, the Crown Prince was constantly in attendance at the meetings. A new departure necessarily involved much discussion of methods of procedure. To the impatient Joseph this seemed to involve great waste of time. "I expected," he says, "to find myself in the midst of Solons and Lycurguses, and to listen to oracles of wisdom. Instead, I had to sit out long-winded speeches bristling with technicalities, and seemingly right over my head. But I was to blame in letting my thoughts wander from the subject in hand. I missed many an opportunity of acquiring sound knowledge."

Joseph's apprenticeship to practical politics had two definite results. In the first place, he began to turn over in his own mind, and to submit to the illuminating judgment of Isabella of Parma, plans of reform to be undertaken, if he were ever in a position to carry them out. In the second place he was profoundly impressed with the ability of Kaunitz, though the Chancellor certainly could not be exonerated from the general charge of verbosity.

During the period following the death of Francis I, Kaunitz in turn was filled with admiration for the zeal with which Joseph devoted himself to the duties of his position. Clearly he had inherited his mother's tremendous capacity for hard work. The day's routine is described by the young Emperor himself in a letter to his brother Leopold. "At half-past six I am out of bed. I hear Mass, and by eight o'clock I am seated at my writing-table dispatching public business with the help of my new secretary. He is a man after my own heart, for he tells me the exact truth and calls everything by its proper name. Towards ten o'clock I see the two paymasters. Afterwards come the Ministers and others who have to be interviewed. Towards half-past twelve I take my morning report to my mother. Prince Kaunitz appears, according to his pleasing custom, at one o'clock, when we are about to sit down to table. The interview is to be short, of course, but many a time it lasts an hour and a half. Thereafter we are free to go to dinner. The spoon is hardly out of my mouth when I have to busy myself in turning out and examining the papers of his late Majesty. I have already made a sad round here in Vienna and in Schönbrunn. . . . It is inconceivable the quantity of documents I have to go through."

This thorough search revealed no will of later date than the one already mentioned. Joseph accordingly entered into possession of twenty-two million gulden in money and securities, and the income from estates in different parts af the country, as well as from the principality of Teschen. Seldom has a great inheritance been put to a more unselfish use. Called to share in the government of a country which a protracted and unsuccessful war had brought to the verge of bankruptcy, the new Emperor began by instituting all sorts of economies. He reduced the personnel of the Court, its ceremonial and expenditure. A picturesque feature disappeared when he dispensed with the pampered Swiss bodyguards. "He gave up the vast hunting establishment maintained by his father."[1] In the region round about Vienna he ordered the extermination of the dangerous and destructive wild boars.

But the lessening of demands on the Treasury, however praiseworthy, could not enable the State to meet the most burdensome of its liabilities—the interest of five and six per cent on its huge debts. The day was at hand when an arbitrary reduction of interest would proclaim the insolvency of the Government. To save the credit of the country Joseph made over to the Treasury the whole of his fortune as the nucleus of a fund for the regular conversion of the National Debt into four per cent securities. When offered the alternative of repayment or reduced interest, a larger number of investors than had been expected chose to retain their bonds. In a letter to Leopold, dated two years later, Joseph was able to announce that only about four million gulden was still charged with interest at six, and thirteen million at five per cent. By 1775, when the co-regency had lasted ten years, "the revenue not only balanced expenditure, but there was actually a surplus of five and a half million gulden, a condition of affairs almost unprecedented in Austria."[2]

With no eyes save for the pressing necessities of his own country, Joseph sent peremptory directions to Florence for the transfer to Vienna of the portion of his father's fortune which was invested in Tuscany. The Grand Duke's ministers were aghast at the proposal to withdraw large sums from the poverty-stricken principality. But Leopold's remonstrances with Joseph ended in so sharp an altercation that their mother was obliged to intervene. With the help of Kaunitz she contrived a settlement of what threatened to prove a serious quarrel. Once back in the sphere of politics, she had no further thought of quitting it. A few weeks later she told Countess Enzenberg that she was finding something of the nature of a soothing drug in throwing herself more completely than heretofore into the work of the State. "I stupefy myself with work," she writes, "till I have no time to think or feel."

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[1] *Germany, 1715–1815*, p. 301. [2] *Ib.*, 301.

Other bereavements had followed hard on the death of the Emperor Francis. Within a month Maria Theresa was condoling with the widow of Haugwitz. "Early this morning,"[1] she writes, "I heard to my great sorrow that you had lost your husband, and the State and the Monarch a most faithful, indefatigable, and efficient Minister. No one can better testify to his great merits than myself. He alone in 1747 could devise the means of bringing order out of the terrible confusion in the management of public affairs. . . . I knew his attachment to our great and dearest Emperor. I counted on his vigour to restore my flagging energy and lighten my burdens. God has suddenly called him away. He is happy. How I envy him."

Five months later the Empress-Queen was lamenting the death of Count Daun. His errors of judgment were forgotten. He was remembered as the victor of Kolin, Hochkirch, and Maxen, and as an able President of the Council of War. Other men might discharge the official duties of Maria Theresa's old friends, but she knew they could never be her fellow-workers in the same intimate sense of the word. The loss of Daun prompted her to delegate part of her authority. In a letter to Count Silva-Tarouca she says: "I have assigned to my son all responsibility for the future of the army. His association with it must of necessity be closer than mine, and doubtless of longer duration. Its weal or woe depends on the measures he may take. If he likes, he can nominate his own Minister of War. Should he consult me, I see no one more competent than Lacy. The military department was the one nearest my heart. Having resigned my connection therewith, it will not cost me much to relinquish everything else."

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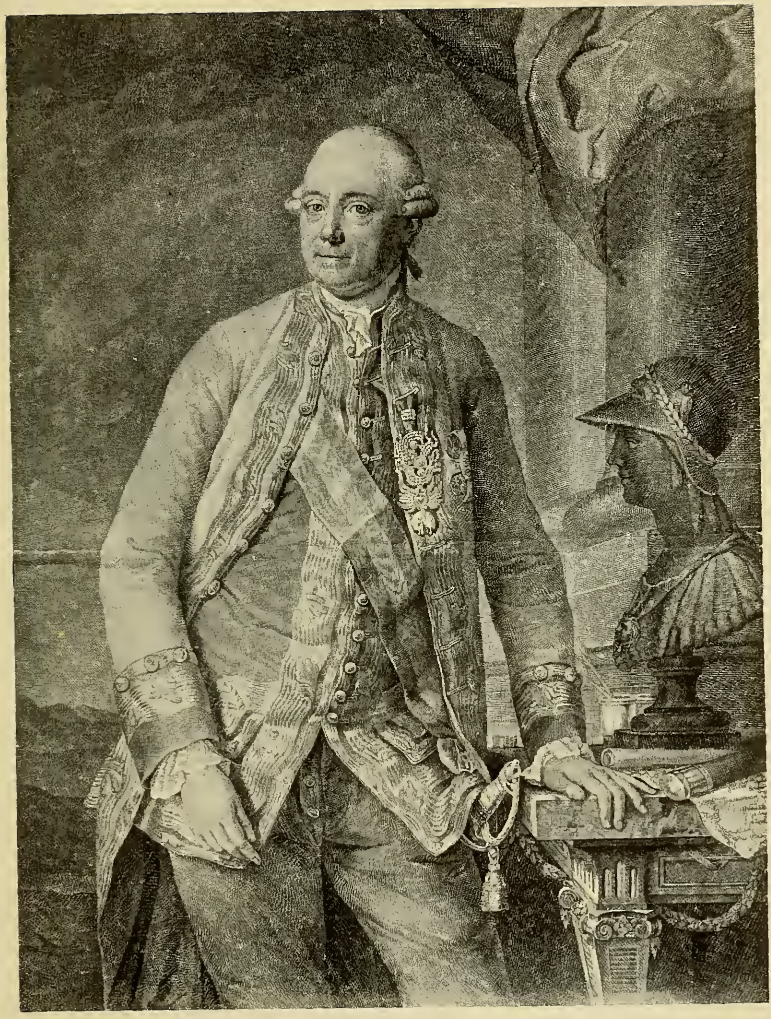
[1] September 11th, 1765.

On the subject of Lacy's merits the Emperor was in full agreement with his mother. Daun was therefore succeeded by his own favourite staff officer, and Joseph paid not the slightest attention to the outcry that arose because the son of an Irish exile had been preferred to men of ancient lineage. There was, indeed, one commander, also of British extraction, to whom the monarchy was more beholden than to Lacy. But as Inspector-General of the Infantry, Laudon had employment that gave scope to his genius as a practical commander, while administration was more particularly Lacy's province. "The latter did excellent work in improving the organization, drill, and equipment of the army, in establishing a definite General Staff, attending to fortification, and bringing the Supply Department properly under the control of the War Council."

Of the officers in general the Emperor had no very high opinion. Too many of them, he said, had been drawn to their profession because of the honour attaching to it, but with little regard for its duties. He specially deplored their aloofness from the rank and file. His own sympathies were with the people as opposed to the privileged classes, with the lower ranks of the army, with the oppressed and half-starved peasantry, with the overworked and underpaid in any capacity.

The most interested and appreciative witness of Joseph's whole-souled devotion to the good of the State was the Empress-Queen herself. But her approbation of his vivifying influence on military and financial affairs was tempered by grave misgivings in regard to the general trend of his policy. And conflicts were bound to ensue when he fell to criticizing her civil government and to condemn the preponderance of religious teaching in the current system of education.

In outward appearance the young Emperor bore a striking resemblance to his mother. In disposition, and to some



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extent in character, they differed fundamentally. Maria Theresa's inherited reverence for the past inclined her to conservatism when circumstances or common sense did not absolutely dictate a departure from established custom. Her knowledge of the forces at work in the countries under her sway made her quick to discern the limits of practicability in the introduction of changes.

Joseph, on the contrary, was a reformer of the most thoroughgoing type. So keen was his perception of flaws in the existing scheme of things that he failed to do justice to the progressive influences which had been at work for a quarter of a century. The changes he advocated were not always timely or necessary, and sometimes they were so sweeping as to be dangerous. For in spite of his democratic leanings, he had a stronger belief in the power of a despotic ruler than the more experienced Empress-Queen.

There was sound sense in his scathing denunciation of the vague and limited views that prevailed on the subject of education. But his mother could not be otherwise than shocked and hurt by his description of "Good souls, who believe they have done everything possible to form the character of a great statesman when their son takes part in the Mass, tells his beads, confesses once a fortnight, and never looks into a book which the narrow understanding of a spiritual director has branded as objectionable. Would any one venture to dissent from the general verdict, 'That is a charming young man. How well he has been brought up'? True enough, I would say, if our State were a cloister and the surrounding neighbours were monks!"

Now Maria Theresa's parting instructions to Leopold had been little more than an elaboration of the points held to be essential by the good souls, who were so hopelessly behind the times. She turned fiercely on the spirit of the new age as manifested in her co-Regent. When he pleaded for religious toleration and restriction of the censorship, his voice was as the voice of Frederick of Prussia saying, "In my country every one shall get to heaven in his own way."

Maria Theresa was determined that her subjects should have no such liberty. Heresy was an unpardonable sin, for which no penalty could be too severe. Had she lived in the Middle Ages she could scarcely have shown more animosity to the Jews, while Frederick's identification with German Protestantism made her suspect the loyalty of the Protestants in her own dominions. In Hungary there was much straining of the laws designed to safeguard their rights. And time has not yet obliterated the memory of notorious instances of the kidnapping of young Protestants in order to bring them up in the Catholic faith. In such cases it was vain to appeal to the Empress. If she took sides it was with the perpetrators of the infamy.

Yet in her own estimation she seemed to be an advanced religious reformer. She had undoubtedly made herself a terror to idlers by procuring a reduction of the number of saints' days observed by abstaining from labour. She had also deprived the churches and convents of the abused right of sanctuary, and made it illegal for monastic vows to be taken before the age of twenty-five, and for an ecclesiastic to be present at the drawing up of a will.

But though she could see the need of putting down abuses within the Church, she refused to admit that tolerance was a subject worth serious consideration. As for the censorship, she would rather extend than limit its jurisdiction. Needless to say that, like all generous-natured bigots with favours to bestow, she was constantly being duped by religious impostors. She might almost be said to have put a premium on hypocrisy. It was at his peril that any one attached to the Court or prominent in the Civil or Military Service absented himself from the Easter Communion. Even Kaunitz, when detained by illness, deemed it expedient to send the Empress his certificate of preliminary confession, to show that he had meant to attend.

Considering the number of subjects on which the co-Regents were at opposite poles, the wonder is, not that they had disagreements and battles royal, but that, on the whole, they worked together so harmoniously. There was no make-believe about their dissensions, and no limits to their plainness of speech. When the belligerents appealed to Kaunitz, he was often sorely put to it to find a middle course. Not infrequently his intellect sided with the Emperor, whereas his sympathy was always with the Empress. At intervals he resigned, and had to be coaxed into reacceptance of office. Joseph occasionally threatened to abandon the regency, whereupon his mother yielded a point. Their deeply rooted affection for one another kept their quarrels free from any suspicion of rancour. It was possible for Maria Theresa to express wholesale condemnation of a course proposed by Joseph, and then to write: "As I end this long sermon, I take your face in my hands and kiss your forehead. I trust you to pardon the tediousness of reading my scoldings, and to look only at the motive which prompts them. You know I desire nothing in this world so much as that you should be esteemed and loved as you deserve." Joseph, quick to respond to the call of affection, at once replies: "Pardon, dearest mother, the fault of a son who loves you inexpressibly. The facts stated are only too true, but I expressed myself with undue vigour. I kneel at your feet to receive the kiss at the close of your letter. It gives me hope of being again taken into favour."

Nothing could have been more in accordance with Joseph's personal wishes than to have the military department under his control. It carried with it a preponderating influence on the foreign policy of the country, which was not always wisely exerted. Thus it came about that Maria Theresa incurred blame for measures of which she disapproved as strongly as any one. But loyalty to her son kept her from ever seeking to resume the power once conferred upon him. From the time of his closer connection with the army Joseph abandoned the Spanish dress that had so long been in vogue at the Austrian Court, and it was truly said of him that "his toilet was that of a common soldier, his wardrobe that of a sergeant, business his recreation, and his life perpetual motion." No monarch ever went about with less formality. To him the people of Vienna are indebted for their parks. Till Joseph's accession to power only the aristocracy had the right to walk and drive in the Prater. This expanse of woodland had originally been a suburban game preserve. Dr. Burney's description of it still holds good. "There is verdure on the ground, and some of the largest trees to be seen anywhere, with frequent views of the Danube. A coach road has been cut through it. It is the Hyde Park of Vienna, but more flat and gloomy than that of London."

When the young Emperor obtained his mother's consent to throwing open the Prater to the citizens in general, a courtier remarked that when His Majesty went walking there in future, he would have to rub shoulders with the common people. "If I could only go walking in the company of my equals," replied Joseph, "I would be obliged to take exercise in the Imperial vault."[1]

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[1] This witticism has most strangely been attributed to Austrian princes of the present day. Save on the lips of the one and only emperor in Europe it has no point. And as it is recorded by Wraxall, it cannot be of later date than Joseph II.

CHAPTER XXIX

THE ELDER DAUGHTERS OF MARIA THERESA

MARIA THERESA could not have given her chief Minister a stronger proof of confidence than when she commended to his care the destinies of her children. That is to say, of her daughters and of Maximilian, her youngest-born; for Ferdinand's future position as Governor of Milan had been determined in the lifetime of his father. From the point of view of the young people, it was not a happy choice of guardian. Their individual well-being was likely to be a minor consideration, if their marriages could serve to buttress up the Chancellor's system of foreign policy. Fortunately the Empress did not at once begin to take her cue from Kaunitz. No motive but desire for their happiness influenced her decisions with regard to her two elder daughters.

In February, 1766, at the age of twenty-seven, Archduchess Marianne was installed as abbess of a religious foundation at Prague. Its members were women of noble birth, and it was serving as a model for the similar institution at Innsbruck. Maria Theresa had made a special journey to her Bohemian capital in 1753, in order to be present at the inauguration of the *Damenstift*. She had promised then to shed lustre on the sisterhood by nominating one of her daughters as a future superior. The office was provisionally allotted to the second Archduchess, but it had become manifest that Marie Christine had no vocation for celibacy, whereas the idea of a marriage for Marianne had never been seriously contemplated.

Her features were not unpleasing, but she was handicapped by slight spinal deformity and marked weakness of the lungs. When she is referred to in contemporary letters, it is usually as suffering from some severe form of ailment. Time after time, her life was despaired of, and she received the last Sacraments; but her resilient power seemed inexhaustible. While robust members of her family succumbed to smallpox and other diseases, Marianne always struggled back to "the warm precincts of the cheerful day." As a rule, the chronic invalid received scant sympathy from Maria Theresa, but she was only concerned to alleviate the lot of the daughter whose gentle, uncomplaining disposition and mental brightness made her limited existence the more pathetic.

Marianne's induction into her ecclesiastical charge took place at a chapter specially convened in the Hofburg. She was under no obligation to reside with her community. It was enough that she should lend it the glamour of her name; but she had expressed her intention of spending some time in Prague. A position of eminence awaited her there, and of independence; for maternal solicitude had caused no less a sum than two million gulden to be settled on the young abbess. But when it came to fixing a date of departure, she could not tear herself away from her home. Her mother wrote to Countess Enzenberg: "You will be surprised to hear that Marianne has lost all inclination to go to Prague, and I prefer to let her do as she likes in the matter."

To Albert of Saxony and Marie Christine, the death of the Emperor Francis seemed a summons to abandon hope. While he lived they had the powerful influence of the Empress on their side. When he was gone, they foresaw his widow's punctilious compliance with all his known wishes. But the lovers had nothing to fear from the woman to whom the present had become less real than the days of her own protracted courtship. She was indeed prepared to give effect to the proposal for a matrimonial alliance with Sardinia, but only if Elizabeth or Amelia could be substituted for Marie as the bride of the Duke de Chablais.

A less sympathetic character might have put off doing anything till after the period of mourning, but Maria Theresa saw no need of prolonging suspense. When she had ascertained that her co-Regent was frankly interested in his sister's romance and ready to stretch a few points in order to hasten the happy ending, their intentions were announced to Marie, who was almost beside herself with relief and gratitude. Joseph then contrived an informal meeting with Prince Albert and repeated the good news. "It was a long time before he would believe that I was speaking seriously," says the Emperor in a letter to Leopold. "When he was convinced beyond doubt, you can imagine the look that came over his face at the thought of a speedy fulfilment of the cherished hope of the last six years. To me, the philosopher Joseph, nothing could be more agreeable than this assurance of congenial society for the rest of my life. As there is no pleasure for me in my own household, I will seek distraction in the new one. I predict that the moments I can devote to relaxation will be spent with my sister and brother-in-law."

The forecast of the disillusioned philosopher rested on the assumption that Vienna would be the head-quarters of Prince Albert and his consort. Just then, however, occurred the death of Batthyany, the Palatine of Hungary. Instead of appointing a native-born successor, Maria Theresa conferred on Prince Albert the office of Lieutenant-Governor of the Kingdom.

This was at variance with the spirit of her pledges to the famous Diet of 1741, and calls for more justification than her ostensible reason, that the late Viceroy had been a lukewarm supporter of her interests at the Diet which sat at Pressburg from July, 1764, to May, 1765. It is true that she was bitterly disappointed by renewed failure to obtain from Hungary a more proportionate contribution to the general exchequer. Since 1751, she had been seeking in various ways to flatter the national sentiment, allay the suspicions of patriots, and to win some degree of compliance with her wishes by cultivating a personal relationship with representatives of the privileged classes.

Thus, in 1760, she instituted the Royal Hungarian Bodyguard. Every county in Hungary could nominate two young nobles to be members of the guard. A palace was built for them in Vienna, and extraordinary favour was shown them at Court. Again, in 1764, before going to Pressburg to open her third Diet, Maria Theresa founded the Order of St. Stephen. It was designed to reward distinguished service to the State in a non-military capacity. Its association with the canonized King of Hungary was undoubtedly gratifying to his latter-day compatriots, though it could not tempt them to earn it by any renunciation of privilege.

As in 1751, so also in 1764–5, Maria Theresa could obtain but a fraction of her desired increase of revenue. The Diet complained that the promise of redress of grievances in return for the earlier contribution had not been kept. On the contrary, the chief grievance had become more burdensome. This was the incidence of a heavy tax on exports from Hungary to Austria, while but a light duty was imposed on goods sent from Austria to Hungary. Thus the Magyar kingdom was reduced to a state of commercial servitude to the other dominions of the Sovereign. "For till the year 1776, when the port of Fiume was annexed to Hungary, it had no connection with the sea, still less with foreign countries." The one outlet was through Austria. Maria Theresa admitted the grievance, and the concession of the seaport and a direct road to it was her subsequent effort to afford relief. But at the frontier between her two monarchies, she could do little in the way of redress. Her efforts merely stirred up discontent amongst her Austrian subjects who resented Hungary's meagre contribution to the general expenditure, and insisted that the balance must somehow be adjusted.

The chief result of the Diet of 1764–5 was Maria Theresa's decision to abandon attempts to effect progress in Hungary through the medium of the national assembly. It had been unanimously opposed to a measure for bettering the lot of the peasantry. But this, she declared, was a matter that concerned her conscience, and "for the sake of a few magnates and nobles, she did not intend to risk eternal damnation." Accordingly, by the exercise of her royal prerogative, she issued, in 1767, an ordinance known as the *Urbarium*, regulating the position of the peasants, and fixing the limits of their obligation to the landed proprietors. They also received a legal status, and right of redress; for disputes regarding the working of the *Urbarium* were not decided by the county courts, but by specially appointed royal commissioners. "It is one of the undying merits of the great Queen that in this manner, without deranging the existing order, she held out hopes of a better future to the peasants, who knew at last who was concerned in their welfare."[1]

The Viceroyalty of Prince Albert of Saxony needs no further explanation. The influence of a Magyar palatine would assuredly have been adverse to a project which tended to undermine the rampant feudalism. Apart from their dogged resistance to her parliamentary proposals, Maria Theresa had no quarrel with the privileged classes of Hungary. She hoped to attach them more firmly to her dynasty by the establishment at Pressburg of a second Habsburg Court.

As a mere matter of sentiment it was also pleasing to her that her prospective son-in-law should succeed to a position once held by her own husband. As in 1736, a Governor of Hungary was coming from Pressburg to Vienna to marry an Austrian princess. Maria Theresa had instituted a further parallel between the two bridegrooms by enabling Albert to assume the title of Duke of Teschen, or rather, as he combined it with his former designation, Prince of Saxe-Teschen. The little principality on the Silesian frontier had been the only territory actually in possession of Francis of Lorraine at the time of his marriage. At his death it passed with his other domains to his eldest son. Joseph consented to let his mother acquire them all at an easy valuation, and all were included in her munificent settlement on her daughter and son-in-law. Marie received in addition a dowry of four million gulden. Not content with this, the Empress obtained a guarantee from the heir to the throne that after the death of Charles of Lorraine, Marie and her husband should become joint-governors of the Netherlands.

On April 8th, 1766, the wedding was quietly celebrated at the Castle of Schlosshof, near the Hungarian frontier, and the Prince and Princess went into immediate residence at Pressburg. Maria Theresa felt as if she had sustained a fresh bereavement. To her daughter's anxious inquiries she replied: "I do not think there is anything wrong with my health, but neither am I at ease. My heart still feels the pang of the latest parting. Within eight months I have been severed by death from the husband I adored, and, by distance, from a son most worthy of my affection, and a daughter who, since the loss of her father, has been my chief source of happiness, my comforter, and my friend. I was like a silly child this afternoon. At three o'clock, I heard your sisters coming through my rooms, and, for a moment, I verily believed that I was going to see my dear Mimi again. I soon remembered that just then she was doing the honours of her own home, and rejoicing in her association with the husband who so dearly loves her. That is a happy issue from all my anxiety during the last two years, and one for which I can never render sufficient thanks to God. By His grace to you and your grace to one another, I trust that your happiness will not only be continued, but that it will increase from day to day."

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[1] Marczali, *Hungary in the Eighteenth Century*, p. 193.

Maria Theresa's hope was abundantly fulfilled. And she presently discovered that, instead of the dreaded blank, she had gained a new interest in life. A vigorous correspondence and frequent exchange of visits prevented any weakening of the intimacy between the young wife and her mother. Their relationship was indeed not unlike that of Queen Victoria and Princess Henry of Battenberg. At the Hofburg and the other Imperial residences special rooms were set apart for the use of Albert and "Mimi." Often Her Majesty's rapidly driven coach took the road to Pressburg. Even when she could only stay a few hours, she felt rested and refreshed by throwing off the trammels of State, and sharing the happy private life of her daughter and the son-in-law, who not only called her mother, but was in truth a devoted and, as it behoved him, a very grateful son.

While the Saxon and Sardinian princes were competing for the hand of Marie Christine, a third suitor was making overtures to the Austrian Court for a marriage with her sister Elizabeth. This was Stanislaus Poniatowski, the new King of Poland. It was a startling suggestion that a Habsburg princess, with her innumerable ancestors, should share the mushroom sovereignty of a Polish noble, and

Stanislaus scored a point when it was not immediately rejected. So far as individual qualities went, he was sufficiently well-equipped, being handsome in person, not much over thirty, and of acknowledged mental superiority. Moreover, "he was showing himself less amenable to Russian authority than had been expected." It was the policy of Catherine II to absorb Poland if she could, and failing that to subject the ancient kingdom to Russian influence. Neither of these courses would have been to the liking of Frederick the Great, since both would have put barriers in the way of his acquisition of the coveted Polish province of West Prussia. Stanislaus hoped that, by the judicious offer of concessions, he might induce "Austria and Prussia to combine to set the Polish constitution on a rational basis, and to help him to assert and maintain his independence. Poland might thus become an efficient barrier against the Russian advance."[1]

Aware that the difficulties in the way of realizing such a scheme would certainly be more apparent to Austria than to Prussia, Poniatowski desired a matrimonial union which would bring him into close intimacy with the Empress-Queen. Unfortunately for his patriotic aspirations, the memory of Silesia still blocked the way to any joint action on the part of Austria and Prussia. "Maria Theresa would have been glad to unite with France to guarantee the integrity of Poland, but she distrusted Frederick too much to co-operate with him in anything."[2] Might he not leave her in the lurch with the power of Russia ranged against her? King Stanislaus was therefore given to understand that, as his throne was wanting in stability, his lack of private fortune was an insuperable hindrance to his marriage with Archduchess Elizabeth.

It is a matter for lasting regret that Maria Theresa could not bring herself to adopt a bolder policy in regard to Poland. Neither Joseph nor Kaunitz was averse from alliance with Frederick if anything was to be gained thereby. And not only would Elizabeth have obtained the title of queen which she coveted as an offset to her beauty, but, what was of infinitely more importance, Poland might have been saved from absolute disintegration. The Empress too would have escaped the pain of being driven into a false position when the first partition of the ancient kingdom took place. While she temporized with Poniatowski, the great opportunity was lost. The Czarina got wind of the negotiations and peremptorily ordered the Polish King to desist, as she would never consent to such a marriage. When he persisted in his attempt to reform the constitution, he received another injunction to refrain, this time from an agent of the Prussian monarch. For in default of Austria, Frederick had cast in his lot with Russia. Stanislaus was informed that it was to his own interest "that Poland should remain in its present state of anarchy." This was in 1766. By the end of the following year the whole country was plunged into civil war, and Stanislaus being identified with Russia, the nationalist party was hopelessly estranged from him.

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[1] *Germany, 1715–1815*, p. 304.

[2] *Ib.*, 304.

Elizabeth is said to have been as disappointed as her suitor that nothing came of the marriage proposal. But it can be readily imagined that the idea of a union between the Archduchess and the Duke de Chablais was more congenial to her mother. It was the subject of much negotiation. The Prince was a younger son, and the Empress did not see her way to providing an establishment for a second daughter. Still the partisans of the Duke did not abandon all hope of a settlement. The matter was still pending when Elizabeth's prospects were lost sight of in a wave of calamity that swept over the Imperial household.

CHAPTER XXX

THE FOURFOLD TRAGEDY—MARIA THERESA'S ENCOURAGEMENT OF INOCULATION

THE carnival of 1767 marked the close of a livelier season than Vienna had known for two years. Maria Theresa still held aloof from all public festivities, but the Imperial Family was well represented. Ceremonial duty brought together that ill-matched couple, the Emperor and his consort; and, under the ægis of their sister-in-law, appeared not only Elizabeth and Amelia, but a less familiar figure in the social life of the Court—the Archduchess Josepha.

The fifth surviving daughter of the Empress-Queen left no room for doubt that she was indeed a member of "an uncommonly well-looking family." She had also something of her mother's charm of manner, and the distinct personality of the girl who has begun to think for herself. Her mental development was partly due to the influence of her eldest brother. Born on his fête day, she too had been named for St. Joseph. And by assuming a special relationship to the Joseph who was twelve years her senior, she ended by establishing a firm hold on his affection. Her unaffianced sisters regarded the sixteen-year-old Princess with some degree of envy. In the course of the summer she was expected to become Queen of the Two Sicilies.

The death of Archduchess Joanna, for whom the position had been originally destined, did not seem either to Maria Theresa or the King of Spain sufficient reason for renouncing their plan of a second matrimonial alliance between their families. Needless to say, this was also the view of Kaunitz, so the shadow of the Sicilian crown became associated with Josepha. Yet the mother's heart misgave her when she learned what manner of youth he was to whom her child would be united. There was certainly no glozing over of facts in the special reports she received from various sources. The verdict of history on Ferdinand IV of Naples is little more than an amplification of the character-sketch by Maria Theresa when the Prince was only fourteen. It was written for the guidance of Countess Lerchenfeld, the Governess to whom was entrusted the training of Josepha for the endurance of life as "a political sacrifice." The Countess is told that her charge "will have a young husband who is growing up with no conception of discipline or of a higher authority than his own. He has never learned to apply himself, and evinces no sustained interest in anything except hunting and the stage. He is quite undeveloped, and can only speak the corrupt Italian of his capital, and even that uncouthly. He does not know what is meant by considering a question, and on various occasions has shown himself prone to harshness and obduracy. There is no one who either can or will take in hand to educate him. They say he is pale and delicate, like the Saxon side of his family. I wish he had the Saxon goodness of heart. I tell you this for your private ear. It will give definiteness to your efforts to instil into my daughter the virtues and habits which will be essential to her if she is to find her happiness at the Court of Naples, or at least to escape perdition. Above all things, seek to kindle in her a spirit of devotion. She has given little evidence of it so far. Impress upon her that, in this world, prayer is the chief source of strength and consolation. She should not be ashamed of being seen at prayer. She is apt to be self-willed, which is undesirable. She is also extremely reserved. In moderation this can do no harm in Naples, but at the same time she must learn to be lively and conciliatory, and able to depend on herself for entertainment. In default of more pressing duty she should resort to reading, painting, and music. Idleness is the poison of life."

With the results of the Countess' tutelage, as far as they could be ascertained in Austria, Maria Theresa declared herself satisfied. During the early months of 1767 her interest in domestic occurrences centred in Josepha's approaching marriage, and the expected arrival at Pressburg of the third of her children's children. The second had recently appeared in Florence. "Another Theresa!" exclaimed the unappreciative grandmother. "I wish it had been a Francis."

On May 13th the Empress-Queen celebrated her fiftieth birthday. It was also the twenty-fifth birthday of her dearly loved second daughter. Within a week complications in childbirth had brought Marie to the borderland of life and death. Her infant could only be kept alive for one day; and though her own condition became less critical, recovery was likely to be slow. Her mother was still under the influence of the shock and suspense when she was told that her eldest son's wife was complaining of illness. The usual remedy of bleeding was, however, expected to check a feverishness so slight that it was ascribed to indigestion. The older Empress, who knew that the younger one was easily depressed, resolved to go and see her. Josepha's grief for her father-in-law had touched a responsive chord in Maria Theresa's nature. Thenceforward she had striven loyally to show kindness and give prominence to the woman for whose unhappiness she was partly to blame.

While she talked to Josepha the surgeon arrived. The Empress-Queen drew back the sleeve from the patient's arm, and perceived to her horror the first symptoms of the eruption of which every one stood in dread. She refused, however, to leave till the bleeding was over, and she had encouraged and even kissed her terrified daughter-in-law.

There was a chance that Maria Theresa, with her excellent constitution, might not prove susceptible to infection; but her possibility of escape became more remote when she was thrown into violent agitation by disquieting news of the invalid at Pressburg. Fever had supervened, and there was renewed anxiety. Before Marie was again pronounced out of danger, her mother was seeking relief from headache in repeated bleeding. It was too late then for preventive measures. Within a week of the fateful visit, the Empress-Queen was prostrated by smallpox in its most virulent form.

In spite of her suffering she showed more concern than any one else for the condition of her daughter-in-law. Symptoms of internal inflammation made Josepha's case specially difficult of treatment. Exhausted by pain, she ceased to desire recovery, and asked for the last rites of the Church. On May 28th came the end of her brief, troubled career. Her husband wrote conventional intimations of "the loss of an estimable consort." Of his attitude in her illness nothing definite is known. It may be taken for granted that he was present when she received the last Sacraments, and that he did not omit such fugitive attention as was compatible with the doubling of his public duties and the Sovereign's prior claim upon the time of the Regent.

It was impossible to evade Maria Theresa's searching inquiries about Josepha. Grief for the pitiful outcome of the Bavarian alliance, and apprehension lest there should be any omission of the honour due to one who had been an Emperor's daughter and an Emperor's wife, resulted in an access of fever. On the day of the funeral the indications of an impending crisis gave rise to some disquietude. The Emperor delegated his duties and remained within summons. There was no limit to his devotion where his mother was concerned. In the intervals of his busy days he gave her the circumstantial reports she demanded, for she did not lose consciousness or interest in everything that was taking place. While health endured, Joseph's invincible desire to remould the existing order of things had filled her with uneasiness and distrust. In sickness he was her chief source of comfort. During the sleepless nights her mind became preternaturally active. She was not troubled about her own endangered life, but she realized what her absence would mean to those dependent on her, and the only person to whom she could impart her wishes, and from whom she could receive the needed reassurance, was the heir to her throne. When he left her for his brief snatches of rest he was never further away than an adjoining room, and always ready to resume the vigil.

With anxiety daily becoming more acute, the citizens of Vienna noted the course of the malady. It was sadly familiar to them all, and they were filled with dismay when it became known that the Empress was about to receive the last Sacraments. Crowds followed in the procession of the Host. Other crowds filled the churches for the simultaneous service of supplication. In the sick-room gathered the members of the household who were protected by former experience of the pestilence. At the last moment came one who had not been expected—Prince Albert of Saxe-Teschen. At the express command of her mother his wife had been kept in ignorance of events in Vienna; but when Marie's recovery seemed assured, the Prince determined to obtain at least one more glimpse of his friend and benefactress. The impulse was natural. To resist it might have seemed a duty in view of his consort's precarious state and his prior immunity from smallpox.

To begin with, however, he could only feel gratification at having accomplished his object, for the day after the religious ceremonial brought an increase of unfavourable symptoms. Again the mournful citizens thronged the churches and, regardless of infection, crowded about the Hofburg. The words of a Court official might have been echoed by multitudes of Her Majesty's subjects: "We are not afraid of the Emperor as King, but we know what we would lose in her."

But the eventful reign had not yet come to an end. When the crisis was past the strong constitution reasserted itself. Recovery might have been more rapid than was actually the case but for a relapse, caused by distress on hearing that Prince Albert was paying the penalty of his rash testimony of affection. Fortunately his attack of smallpox was of the milder type, and gave rise to no alarm, though it retarded the progress of his consort and his mother-in-law.

From all parts of her dominions came expressions of joy in the restoration of the monarch who had established a stronger claim than any of her predecessors to the whole-hearted allegiance of her subjects. In her own city of Vienna the element of personal knowledge and affection counted for much. Her progress to and from the Cathedral, on the occasion of the public thanksgiving, was attended by demonstrations of unbounded loyalty and jubilation. The general feeling was that which found expression in a letter from the Emperor to Kaunitz: "There is only one Maria Theresa, and I am more enthusiastic about her than ever."

At the present day one takes as a matter of course the reciprocal friendliness of sovereign and subjects. At the thanksgiving of 1767 it should rather be regarded as the measure of a woman's humanizing influence on monarchical institutions. Even in the time of Charles VI it was not the Emperor, but the Imperial position, that the people cared about. To his daughter it was given to inaugurate a more natural and modern relationship. Essentially modern was the advance in rank for the doctor, and the publication of a direct message of thanks and goodwill from the ruler to the people.

When the recovery of the Empress-Queen had been duly celebrated, preparations for the marriage of Josepha were resumed. Her lavish trousseau, which had been ordered from France, caused a vast amount of talk and some natural grumbling amongst home manufacturers. With the Emperor as companion, the bride-elect made the pilgrimage to Mariazell, invariably associated with Imperial marriages. To be torn away from home and country and exposed to the fierce criticism of a strange Court, was not an exhilarating prospect. But the parting which the girl dreaded most of all was still in the distance. With this favourite sister Joseph was prepared to go all the way to Naples, and both looked forward to the break of journey at Florence, where they were to be entertained by Leopold and his consort.

On September 8th an Ambassador-Extraordinary from King Ferdinand made formal request for the hand of the Archduchess. The betrothal was followed by balls, concerts, and other state functions. For the first time since the death of her husband Maria Theresa was seen at public assemblies. She had not passed scathless through her terrible ordeal. All trace of her former beauty was gone. The short hair beneath her close-fitting widow's cap was thin and nearly white, and she had become painfully near-sighted. From the depths which had threatened to engulf her she had emerged, but only for a moment. Then the waves and billows broke over her afresh.

All Vienna shared the grief and consternation of the Imperial household when, on October 4th, the young bride was suddenly seized with illness, which turned out to be smallpox of the malignant type always attended with risk. The Empress had the mournful satisfaction of being free to take a personal share in the nursing of her daughter.

The Venetian Ambassador wrote that "though Her Majesty's sorrow was very great, it was equalled, if not surpassed, by that of the Emperor, who was inconsolable at the thought of danger to the dearest of his sisters." Again he watched through anxious days and nights, a soothing presence in Josepha's intervals of consciousness. After a week's suffering she divined her peril, and asked for the last rites. At nightfall on October 15th, still clinging to her brother, she passed away.

There is no doubt as to how in this instance the disease was acquired. In a letter to her daughter Marie, dated October 4th, 1771, the Empress says: "It is four years to-day since Josepha went with me to the vault and caught smallpox." The vault in question was the burying-place of the Imperial Family, beneath the Capuchin Church, in Vienna. October 4th is St. Francis' Day, and, unfortunately, Maria Theresa was accompanied by her daughter when she made her customary pilgrimage to the tomb of her husband. She was probably unaware that there had been delay in providing the metal receptacle for the coffin of Empress Josepha; for it is unthinkable that she would wittingly have jeopardized a life so precious as that of the destined queen. The story that Josepha was reluctant to go to the vault, and that Maria Theresa exacted her attendance as a token of filial piety, is without substantiation. The girl herself referred to the incident during her illness, and told how she had prayed at the tomb of Joanna that God would make it manifest, if it were not His will that she, any more than her sister, should go to Naples. For her mother she had only words of affection. The rumour of an enforced visit to the vault may have been a distorted version of the fact that the Empress desired her daughter's journey to Italy to include a brief stay at Innsbruck for prayer in the chapel which perpetuated the memory of Emperor Francis.

Not only in the palace, but in the city and the surrounding region, smallpox raged during the summer and autumn of 1767. In the light of modern science the disinfection of sick-rooms and of those who had been in attendance therein was woefully inadequate. Hence it came about that when Archduchess Elizabeth attended the Requiem Mass for her sister, she was already in the grip of the hideous disease that, like another Minotaur, demanded its ceaseless tribute of human victims. That she was not devoured outright was little consolation to the unfortunate girl, for she had been stripped of all her radiant loveliness. There is, indeed, no more pathetic illustration of the horror of smallpox in those pre-inoculation days than the story of Elizabeth: "as soon as she knew what her disease was, calling for a looking-glass and taking leave of those features she had so often heard praised, and which she believed would be greatly changed before she should see them again."

The fourfold tragedy sent a shudder throughout Europe, and gave a powerful impulse to the only known means of evading the universal scourge. In the Austrian capital there was a general outcry against the medical treatment which had been so hopelessly found wanting. De Haen, nothing daunted, reiterated his theory about supplementing nature, but neither speech nor pamphlets could reinstate him as an authority on smallpox. Van Swieten's enemies were jubilant over the supposed discovery of a vulnerable point in his armour. But while recent events had made Maria Theresa suspect error in judgment, they had also given her touching proofs of the personal devotion of her physician, and she was determined to take no fresh step save in conjunction with him. He was still unconvinced of the harmlessness of inoculation, but, unlike De Haen, he did not refuse to associate himself with a new departure.

The country of Lady Mary Montagu was the only one in which inoculation had found general acceptance. When it was resolved to make trial of the system in Vienna, the inquiry for a skilled operator was addressed to Sir William Pringle, the physician of George III. With Van Swieten as intermediary it was natural that Pringle should recommend John Ingenhouse, a Dutchman who had studied in Edinburgh as well as Leyden, who was a member of the Royal Society of London, and an expert on the subject of inoculation. In Vienna he was received with all honour and accorded the status of a Court physician. Accounts differ as to whether his first patients were members of the Imperial Family or children of poor citizens on whom the Empress desired him to experiment. What is certain is that before the end of 1768 Ingenhouse inoculated the Archdukes Ferdinand and Maximilian, and the Emperor's little daughter. When they all recovered without disfigurement from their slight attacks of smallpox, Maria Theresa became an enthusiastic advocate of the new treatment. To give the doctors of the capital full opportunity of familiarizing themselves with the practice of inoculation, she invited parents in poor circumstances to bring their children to Hetzendorf, an Imperial residence not far from Schönbrunn. There they received, without charge, the same advantage as the young princes. Sixty-five youngsters were thus collected, and again the operation was successful. The recovery was celebrated by a festival at Schönbrunn, to which both the children and their parents were invited. The Empress presided, and her sons and daughters helped to wait upon the guests. Thus confidence in the new treatment was assured. Hetzendorf remained at the service of the doctors and of successive companies of patients, who were seldom too ill to enjoy themselves. "In Austria," remarks a traveller, "people take smallpox just as in other countries they take the waters!"

Thus amongst those who could afford to purchase immunity the plague was stayed. But the memories of 1763 and 1767 were mingled with bitter regret that the remedy had not been tried sooner. The *Te Deum* for her recovery could have had little meaning for Elizabeth. "I could not join in it without tears," says her mother, "and without seeming to hear as an undertone the chanting of the *De Profundis*."

Joseph's feeling finds utterance in his reply to a communication of Louis XV, expressing concern on hearing that his great-granddaughter had been inoculated. The Emperor's defence of the preventive measure ends in sorrow that it had not been introduced before. "I might not now be lamenting the wife who was the joy of my existence." As a convincing proof that no harm had come of the experiment, a little letter was enclosed from the six-year-old Theresa to His Majesty of France: "Knowing that you love me, dear grandpapa, I assure you that I am astonishingly well. I had only fifty pocks, which give me great pleasure."

CHAPTER XXXI

THE FIRST PARTITION OF POLAND

BETWEEN the day when Maria Theresa turned back from the gates of Death and the day when they closed behind her, lie thirteen years of toil for her country, and vigilant oversight of her children. In the sphere of foreign politics they include such outstanding events as the first Partition of Poland, the suppression of the Jesuit Order, and the outbreak of a war of the Bavarian Succession. Within the monarchy the system of reform begun at an earlier period was notably developed and extended. Yet in a personal life of the Empress-Queen there is no need to dwell at length on the historical aspect of the last stage of her career. The sovereignty that was peculiarly her own, ends with the death of her husband. Thenceforward we are faced with the curious spectacle of the beginning of one reign overlapping the close of another. Not that any hard-and-fast line can be drawn between them. The heated disputes of the co-Regents are not so much the outcome of essential difference of policy as of the same policy viewed from the standpoint of rulers of different generations and very different temperaments.

Seldom, therefore, can it be said of any particular measure, "This is the work of Maria Theresa, or this of Joseph." But it may be safely asserted that if the Empress had been solely responsible for the foreign policy of her later years, Austria would have had neither part nor lot in the dismemberment of Poland. Her sins against the unhappy country were sins of omission. It has already been shown how opportunities of averting, or at least of staving off, the tragedy of 1772 were lost from lack of prescience, lack of enterprise, and morbid apprehension of treachery on the part of Frederick the Great.

Austria still held aloof when France, realizing the significance of the Polish crisis, sent money and officers to the assistance of the national party, and stirred up the enemies of Catherine II. But the result of embroiling Russia and Turkey proved disastrous to the latter country. The Czarina was presently in a fair way to obtain the footing which she coveted for Russia on the shores of the Black Sea. Joseph, perceiving Turkey's approaching need of a mediator, began to scheme for the office with an eye to territorial acquisitions for Austria in return for his services. Kaunitz and Lacy directed their energies to the same end. Maria Theresa protested vehemently but unsuccessfully against any attempt to make capital out of the extremity of the Turks. Had they not laid her under an eternal obligation by refraining from taking advantage of her weakness at the time of her accession?

At this juncture Frederick was seized with panic lest Austria and Russia should unite, and then turn against an isolated Prussia. He therefore contrived a meeting with Joseph, at Neisse, in Silesia, and disquieted his guest by hinting at the likelihood of a Russian advance to the Danube. "He then warned Catherine that Austria would in all probability resist any further attack on Turkey, and that, exhausted as his country was, he could not give her any material help. Finally he proposed that the three Powers should come to terms over the Turkish question, and take their compensation in Poland.

"Catherine would have preferred to continue the Turkish War while she gradually paved the way for the complete absorption of Poland. But she was not prepared to face both Austria and Turkey without assistance. After some hesitation she complied with Frederick's suggestion."[1]

To bring Austria into line was a matter of infinitely greater difficulty. Unlike Joseph, Maria Theresa had never coveted the provinces of Poland or of the Porte. She marvelled that her son and her Chancellor did not share her loathing of a transaction which would degrade her in her own eyes, and make her the accomplice of Frederick in a political crime on all fours with the seizure of Silesia.

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[1] *The Age of the Enlightened Despot*, p. 211.

In earlier days she might have wrenched herself free from the net in which she had become entangled. But she could not repudiate the authority of her co-Regent, who, in order to alarm Russia, had assembled a considerable force near the Turkish frontier. Nor was she impervious to the arguments of the Minister in whom she placed such absolute confidence. Sorrow, she thought, had appeared to her in every conceivable shape and form. But never before had she known the exceeding bitterness of finding herself so situated that she could not go forward without juggling with her conscience, or backward without alienating the heir to her throne. There is a world of regret and perplexity in her message to Kaunitz on January 22nd, 1772.[1]

" After all the false steps we have taken, which I felt at the time to be false, we can never get right back to the old way. . . . The sending to Hungary of troops from Italy and the Netherlands, the Convention with Turkey, the far too menacing tone we adopted with the Russians, the secretive attitude we have maintained towards friends and foes alike—all this is the result of our determination to extort profit from the contest between the Porte and Russia, and to extend our frontiers and secure advantages of which we never dreamed before the war. In fine, we set ourselves to play the Prussian, and at the same time preserve the appearance of honesty. . . . From the outset of my unfortunate reign we have at least striven to follow truth and justice, to keep troth, to give proof of moderation and of fidelity in the fulfilment of our engagements. Thus we had won the confidence and, I venture to say, the admiration of all Europe. We were respected and honoured by our very enemies. All this we have lost within a single year. Nothing on earth could have been so grievous to me as the forfeiture of our good name. Unfortunately I must admit, and to you, that we deserve it. It is for this that I am in search of a remedy. Let us abandon as evil and pernicious the idea of fishing for advantage in the existing political whirlpool. Let us consider by what means we can extricate ourselves from our deplorable situation without thinking of territorial gain, but of the re-establishment of our reputation, our credit, our claim to straightforwardness, and, as far as possible, of the political balance of power."

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[1] This message was first published in the correspondence between Maria Theresa and Joseph. At a later date Von Arneth quotes it as a letter to Kaunitz. *Geschichte Maria Theresia's*, Vol. VIII, p. 353.

In her use of the plural pronoun, and her expressions of poignant regret, the Empress blames herself unduly for a course, every step of which had been vigorously opposed by her. Her appeal was peculiarly embarrassing to Kaunitz, whose power as Minister of Foreign Affairs she had curtailed when she made him the servant of two masters. He had to convince her that, at the stage at which the proceedings had arrived, his intervention would do more harm than good. Catherine had decided to appropriate all Poland on the east of the Dwina and the Dnieper. Frederick was bent on rounding off his dominions by annexing the provinces which had hitherto separated his Electorate of Brandenburg and his Duchy of East Prussia. Maria Theresa was invited to join in the partition, but it was announced that it would take effect whatever the answer from Vienna might be. Kaunitz declared that there was nothing to be done but to indicate the districts of Poland which might with advantage be transferred to Austria.

Maria Theresa admitted that the easiest way to end the war and bring about a political settlement would be to fall in with the proposed disintegration. But, she continues, "with what right can we rob an innocent nation that it has hitherto been our boast to protect and support? . . . I do not comprehend the policy whereby for the mere sake of present convenience and possible benefit in the future, it is made incumbent on a third ruler to imitate the iniquity of two others who are destroying an unoffending Power. This seems to me a most untenable proposition. There is not one kind of justice for a prince and another for a private individual. The greatness and the strength of a State will not be taken into consideration when we all appear to render our final account."

But the "third Power," as represented by Joseph and Kaunitz, was not a whit behind the other two in territorial acquisitiveness. In spite of a reluctant Maria Theresa still holding back, Austria's share in the spoil was duly agreed upon. It became known as the Province of Galicia, though it comprised portions of other districts and the city of

Cracow. Kaunitz, as usual, stretched demand to its utmost limit, and prepared for concessions. But the vultures hovering over Poland were too eager to devour their own share of the prey to haggle indefinitely about the portion on which the Austrians might settle. Frederick's gibe about "the excellence of their appetite" was not, however, calculated to lessen Maria Theresa's sense of political degradation.

Throughout the negotiations the Chancellor's chief difficulty was with the Empress, whose grief broke out afresh every time her assent was required to provisions of the treaty. Adrift from the familiar moorings she became bewildered, discouraged, and utterly dependent on her Minister. "Tell me your opinion," she writes to him, "and I will act upon it, for my son and I see things in a very different light. . . . When you are not present I can come to no definite conclusion." In August, 1772, the Treaty of St. Petersburg, in its final form, reached Vienna. It had already been signed by the Czarina and the King of Prussia. The Emperor and Empress received it with a memorial from Kaunitz, showing that it conceded all the demands on which Austria had laid stress. "I am indebted to you for this good news," said Joseph in reply. But Maria Theresa wrote only two words—*Habe unterschrieben,* "I have signed."

A month later she confides to her son Ferdinand that this wretched Partition of Poland had robbed her of at least ten years of life. "You will be duly informed of the dreary course of the affair. How often did I strive to dissociate myself from an action which sullies the whole of my reign. God grant that I may not be held responsible for it in another world: I am haunted by it now. It weighs on my heart and tortures my brain and embitters my days—days sad enough without that. I must pull myself up sharply, or the worry of it all will land me in melancholia."

CHAPTER XXXII

THE YOUNGER DAUGHTERS OF MARIA THERESA

THE changes which the years had wrought in the Imperial household are indicated by the fact that, in 1772, the Empress could only communicate with Ferdinand by letter. One by one the younger members of her family had been, as it were, pulled up by the roots and planted afresh in alien soil. Ferdinand, the last to go, was also the happiest in his destination. In Beatrix of Modena he found a companionable wife; and Milan was not suffered to make exacting demands on its boyish governor. Recollections of Leopold's illness on his wedding-day, may account for Maria Theresa's anxiety to hear that everything had gone well at the ceremony in Milan Cathedral. But Ferdinand would have been without excuse, if he had failed to play his part perfectly. In marriages by proxy, he had already personated the husbands of three of his sisters.

In the fate of these luckless beings the finger of Kaunitz is clearly to be discerned. The Bourbon Alliance was the idol which he fell down and worshipped. But he must have had grave doubts of its stability, when he required no fewer than three princesses to sacrifice their lives for the purpose of keeping it upright.

From the doom which had threatened her sisters, Joanna and Josepha, there was no way of escape for Archduchess Caroline. In 1668, at the age of fifteen, she was married to Ferdinand of the Two Sicilies. From the sheltering wing of her mother and the companionship of the chief object of her affection, her sister Antoinette, she was torn away and thrust into what seemed to her in the first months "a very hell upon earth." Fortunately she was a girl of spirit and resource. Though hampered by deficient education, she contrived to make herself a power in the life of her husband and of the Court of Naples. Her support of Austrian policy was not in the long run an advantage to her adopted country, but it gained her the hearty approval of her mother. "Caroline is more like me than any of my other daughters," said Maria Theresa at the time of the Austro-Sicilian marriage. And seven years later, she writes to Marie: "You know how fond I am of your sister Caroline. I must do her the justice to say that, next to you, she has always shown the most genuine attachment to me and the greatest readiness to follow my advice."

Caroline's little part in history does not, however, belong to the lifetime of her mother, but to the revolutionary period when she was the "dear Queen" of Nelson's Lady Hamilton. As an ancestress she is also interesting, though it was certainly no honour to be the grandmother of the notorious "Bomba."

The next Bourbon marriage—that of Archduchess Amelia to Ferdinand, Duke of Parma—was a political blunder and a starting-point of tragi-comic incidents which made Parma a byword in the Courts of Europe.

Amelia was, from all accounts, much better-looking than Caroline. Her mother was particularly severe on her want of application, but failed to amend the educative system which made such scanty provision for mental discipline. It is noteworthy that, in Amelia's case, an unusual amount of praise is mingled with the fault-finding. "You are extraordinarily patient," she was told, "ready to do a good turn to others, and, when you choose, you can be so absolutely winning that it is difficult to resist you."

A visitor, who was made much of at the Austrian Court in the last weeks of 1767, Duke Charles of Zweibrücken,[1] speedily capitulated to the charm of Amelia. She continued to show him the sunny side of her nature, for, though his patrimony hardly warranted aspiration to her hand, he was the presumptive successor of two heirless potentates, the Electors of Bavaria and of the Palatinate.

Early in the following year, the envoy of the Elector Palatine sought the consent of the Emperor and Empress to a marriage between the Duke and the Archduchess. The prospects of the young suitor, combined with the flavour of romance, might have gained him the support of the Empress, if Kaunitz had not scoffed at the bare idea of such an alliance. It was, he declared, a proposal to substitute a speculative benefit to the State for the certainty of a new link between Habsburg and Bourbon at Parma. The Chancellor had his way. To him it seemed a mere matter of sending a negative answer to one Court and an acceptance to another. But he reckoned without Amelia, and without the lasting resentment of Charles of Zweibrücken.

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[1] Or Deux-ponts.

The Archduchess evidently realized that it was useless to protest, much as she disliked the thought of being married to a youth of eighteen instead of to a man of her own age, which was three-and-twenty. She was yet more dismayed when, in the summer of 1769, she arrived in Parma, to find that her husband had been vastly overrated by description. To her he seemed almost a child, and a foolish one to boot, who found pleasure in munching chestnuts of his own roasting, ringing church bells, and jesting with peasants on the highway. The Empress-Queen was likewise taken aback by the reports of returning wedding guests. She felt that she had been too ready to credit any laudatory statement about the son of Don Philip and the brother of the peerless Isabella. Though no lover of unconventionality, she was positively relieved to hear that her daughter, far from brooding over her disappointment, had taken to rise early in order to explore her new country on foot or on horseback. "The sacrament of marriage has aroused our sleepy princess," was Her Majesty's pious comment.

The vision of a regenerate Amelia was dispelled by the arrival of the next courier. Transformed she seemed indeed to be, but into a very spirit of unrest and mischief. Thenceforward there was no sympathy for the political victim, with her ill-regulated mind and pathetic craving for distraction. It was bad enough that her mistaken generosity should fill the palace with beggars; that an admonition to "get to know men" should be taken with dangerous literalness; but an attempt to make herself absolute ruler of Parma, was an unlooked-for and alarming development.

Hitherto the little principality had not suffered from the youth and ineptitude of its sovereign. Du Tillot, the chief Minister of the late Duke, had kept a firm hold on the reins of government. At the instigation of his opponents Amelia determined to wrench them out of his hands. Thus she became embroiled with his supporters, and in the general confusion the chariot of State was likely to be overturned.

The horrified Empress penned stern remonstrances and sent one envoy after another to Parma. The Duke was taken to task by his uncle, the King of Spain, and his grandfather, the King of France. Amelia professed contrition and promised amendment, but her impulse to tamper with the machinery of government was apparently irrestible. There was talk of sending her back to Austria. "Not by herself," was her mother's emphatic announcement. "Either she comes with her husband or she stays in Parma." In Parma she remained, and the birth of a son strengthened her tie to the duchy, and did something to restore her prestige. To avoid suspicion of complicity, Maria Theresa had found it needful to break off all communication with the turbulent Duchess. When the latter pledged herself to greater docility, letters were again interchanged. But there remained a painful feeling of estrangement between the Empress and the black sheep of the Habsburg flock.

For a moment it seemed as if the political martyr at Naples might likewise commit the unpardonable sin of taking an overt interest in politics. And though at the bidding of her mother and father-in-law, Caroline renounced her anti-ministerial attitude, it was not until she had caused a certain amount of flutter in diplomatic circles. Maria Theresa was not only scandalized, she was seriously alarmed lest the King of France should withdraw his consent to a marriage between the Dauphin and her youngest daughter. It had been well for Marie Antoinette if this had verily been the result of her sisters' hankering after power. As it was, their injudicious meddling contributed not a little to make the Archduchess an object of suspicion from the day she first set foot in France, in May, 1770.

Her marriage with the grandson of Louis XV had long been contemplated. It was indeed regarded as the copestone of the system of foreign policy built up by Kaunitz.

Even in childhood Antoinette was shown off to French travellers of distinction. In 1766, Madame Geoffrin, whose *salon* was the meeting-point of all that was best in Parisian society, set out to visit Stanislaus Poniatowski. During his residence in France, she had come to take a maternal interest in the Polish noble. And when, as King, he invited her to Warsaw, she forgot her seventy years and set off blithely. At Schönbrunn the old *salonière* was received with much cordiality. She did not need significant hints to induce her to make friends with a little princess, who was looking forward to her eleventh birthday. Madame declared her to be "lovely as an angel." The Empress was frankly pleased, and expressed the hope that her visitor would write to France that she had seen the youngest Archduchess and found her beautiful.

The childish prettiness was not wholly outgrown when, in her fifteenth year, Marie Antoinette came as a bride to Versailles. Madame Du Barry's curt dismissal of her as "a little red-haired thing," was obviously dictated by spite. For even before the passing of the awkward age, portraits of the girlish Dauphine distinctly foreshadow the "delightful vision" of after days.

Maria Theresa has been roundly condemned for exposing an innocent, impressionable child to the polluted atmosphere of the Court of Louis XV. But it must be remembered that a reigning sovereign is not on the same plane as the ordinary ambitious mother "with her little hoard of maxims." The monarch who had made it a rule to remind herself each day that she was not her own, that she belonged to the State, could not but feel that a similar conception of life was demanded of her children. The marriage tie to the French Bourbons had long been deemed essential to Austria. It had been sought in Joseph's marriage to Isabella. The tragedy of its attainment could not be foreseen.

Besides, the Empress had no intention of leaving the girl to her own devices. The continuance of her education would, it was hoped, divert her mind from the more noxious aspects of her surroundings. And an experienced counsellor was to be always at hand not only to keep the young Princess from entangling herself in the network of intrigue that surrounded the French throne, but to have the oversight of her whole existence. In short, to be to her what Count Silva-Tarouca had been to her mother.

The man on whom this difficult and even dangerous post was conferred was Count Florimond de Mercy-Argenteau, since 1766 Austrian Ambassador to the Court of Versailles. Prior to that date he had been Ambassador to Russia and Poland, though perhaps most prominent as the representative of Maria Theresa at Parma, during the negotiations for Joseph's first marriage. The office with which he was now entrusted, was one which could not have been held for a day had its actuality been suspected. That for the space of ten years, Count Mercy discharged its duties to the entire satisfaction of the Empress; that he wrote almost daily reports of the life of her daughter, and dispatched them at regular intervals, often enclosing private letters from the Dauphine herself, and that all this took place without discovery under the very noses of an army of spies, is one of the most amazing achievements of eighteenth-century diplomacy.

For all her loyalty to the system which kept her in close touch with her mother, Marie Antoinette had her fits of rebellion against the dictates of her guardian. Even when, in 1774, she became Queen of France, she was still liable to a double dose of remonstrance for her shortcomings, since disregard of Mercy's injunctions entailed admonishment from the Empress a week or two later. Still the guardianship kept her out of many a pitfall, and went far to ensure her popularity during the early years of her husband's reign.

CHAPTER XXXIII

THE DIMINISHED FAMILY—THE DEATH OF MARIA THERESA'S FIRST GRANDCHILD AND OF HER OLDER FRIENDS

NEITHER the thought of performing a duty to the State nor any other reflection, could lessen Maria Theresa's grief in bidding farewell to her children. After long absence her married sons came back to visit her; but her three youngest daughters returned to her no more. Convention, considerations of expense, doubt as to what might happen if the presence of the sovereign were withdrawn, all combined to restrict the movements of eighteenth-century rulers. Their consorts went to them with a sense of finality.

Therefore we find the Empress-Queen striving to project herself into the future of her departing boys and girls, and, not content with lavishing upon them words of counsel and warning, she bestows upon each, as a last token of affection, voluminous written instructions — scrolls which the young pilgrims are to study for their guidance.

Her thoughts go onward with them when the distance hides them from her sight. Her tears fall over their first homesick letters. She misses the familiar faces, the familiar voices and footsteps. When the departure of Marie Antoinette was followed by the departure of Ferdinand, the Empress was only fifty-four, but she began to feel strangely old.

Her daughters Marianne and Elizabeth still remained to bear her company. The Abbess of Prague had developed into "a pleasing woman of the world." She was writing a description of the medals, nearly three hundred in number, which had been struck to commemorate the leading events of her mother's life and reign. To her mother she dedicated the finished volume, a work of value to the historian.

It was particularly hard for Elizabeth, with her enjoyment of social stir and public festivity, to have missed predominance in a Court of her own. Her loss of beauty would not necessarily have prevented marriage with her Sardinian cousin, the Duke de Chablais; but her mother's resources were drained by excessive generosity to Marie and Prince Albert, both before and after their marriage. And Joseph steadily refused to help in the establishment of another "dear brother-in-law." For Elizabeth, the Empress now designed the position which, in the first years of her widowhood, she had dreamed of for herself—that, namely, of Abbess of the *Damenstift*, at Innsbruck.

In addition to the two princesses, the Imperial household still included Maria Theresa's eldest and youngest sons. Maximilian, with his fifteenth birthday at hand, was making fitful response to much tutoring. No destiny had as yet been carved out for him. When an ecclesiastical career was suggested, his mother declared herself utterly opposed to the practice of conferring clerical appointments on mere boys. If Maximilian decided for the Church, well and good; but she preferred to think of him as a future military commander.

The Empress freely admitted that she suffered from the physical and mental strain of conflict with her fellow-Regent. But she would have repudiated with all the vigour of which she was capable the notion that her life was made wretched by unfilial conduct. Their differences of opinion were legion, but Joseph and his mother rarely misunderstood one another. It is not surprising that the latter sometimes yielded to her son when her own would have been the more excellent way, since she could say, "I love him so dearly that in the act of opposing him I feel that I want him to be right. An hour or two afterwards I am miserable to think I have vexed him."

She became increasingly reluctant to maintain an unflinching attitude as she perceived that when Joseph's views were met with uncompromising indignation, he was apt to contrive a journey that took him away from Vienna till the storm blew over. A wiser course could scarcely have been devised, but wandering did not find favour with Maria Theresa. She granted the necessity of the Emperor's presence at military manœuvres and of inspection on his part of fortresses and frontier stations, but she could not comprehend his love of travel for its own sake, nor the dislike of the born traveller for any deviation on his own account from the established custom of the place of his sojourn. Her own rule had put an end to the stilted sovereignty of her predecessors, and the pendulum came full swing when Joseph, garbed as an ordinary traveller, made shift with the accommodation of the inns on his route, and fraternized with people of every grade in society. It was the only means of obtaining what he wanted, first-hand knowledge of the conditions of life in his own and other countries.

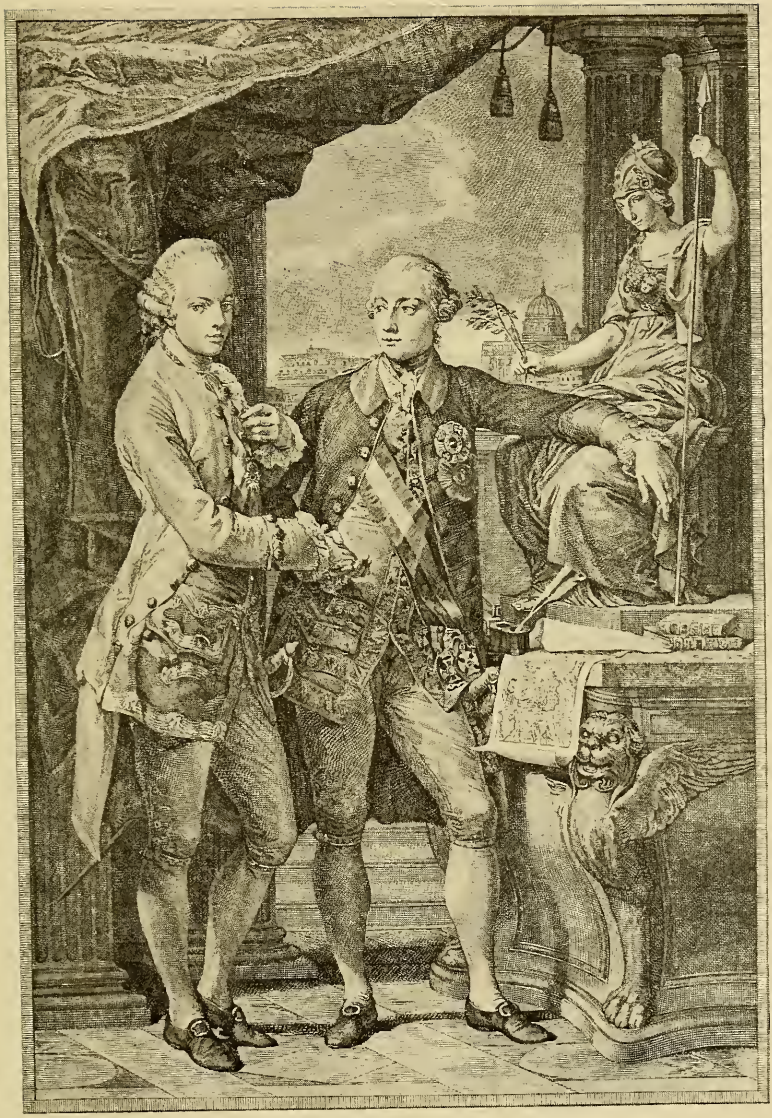
Change of scene and society became his sole relief from the routine of business when the death of his little girl left him in unredeemed loneliness. In January, 1770, the Empress writes to Beatrix d'Este: "I did not think to begin the new year by telling you of the loss of my dear granddaughter. It is all the greater inasmuch as she was an only child, full of promise and charm, the darling of her father, and his one source of relaxation. He is feeling his loss so keenly that I fear for his own health. I myself am so overcome that I can only write these few lines."

Joseph's fatherhood had been as unconventional as his travelling. His Theresa regarded him as a boon companion, to be played with when he was at home, to exchange letters with if he were away. She was his visible link to the wife he never ceased to mourn. In 1769 he was in Italy on the anniversary of his mother's birthday, but he arranged that his message to her should be presented by the seven-year-old daughter whom he calls his "other self." Theresa's upbringing bade fair to be a further bone of contention between her father and grandmother. The former had determined that she should have something more than the meagre intellectual equipment of his sisters. The Marquise d'Herzelle, a woman of culture and refinement, was invited from Brussels and installed as Theresa's Governess. The Emperor was willing that she should think out her own plan of education, but Maria Theresa could not refrain from issuing instructions on the old lines.

Differences on this score were cut short by the illness of the little Archduchess. A cold, probably acquired in her grandmother's chilly apartments, developed into inflammation of the lungs. From the sick-room the Emperor was rarely absent. The child clung to her father and refused food or medicine from any one else. If his care could have availed, the precious life would have been saved. His own seemed scarcely worth having without his "other self." Writing to her Governess he says: "To be no longer father seems more than I can bear. . . . I shall miss my daughter all the remaining days of my life." The things of value which had been presented to her were, with few exceptions, to be either retained by Madame d'Herzelle, or distributed amongst those who had been in attendance on the child. But he continues: "One thing I beg of you, let me have the little white woollen dress with the embroidery of flowers, that she has been wearing indoors, and likewise some of her attempts at writing, which I will keep with her mother's writings."

Had Theresa lived a few weeks longer she would have completed her eighth year, and also helped to celebrate her father's twenty-ninth birthday. The Empress was reluctant to abandon hope that he might eventually be induced to contract a third marriage. But her hints as to the desirability of such a step merely elicited a reminder that in Leopold's boys the succession was assured.

With a thrill of exultation Maria Theresa heard of the arrival of her first grandson on February 12th, 1768. She was alone when the important intimation reached her; but her sons and daughters were in the adjoining playhouse, and the news was too good to keep. Hastening along the corridor, in attire more suggestive of comfort than state, she entered the theatre for the first time since her husband's death. The unlooked-for sight of the Empress, in eager conversation with the occupants of the Imperial box, drew all eyes from the stage, and the performance came to a standstill. Thereupon Her Majesty leant forward, and in the Viennese colloquial, which came more readily to her than any other form of speech, she made known to the audience that Leopold had got a boy, and on her wedding-day, too. Was it not gallant of him? It was the same impulsive Maria Theresa who had interrupted the Corpus Christi procession half a century before. Little did she think



JOSEPH II AND LEOPOLD OF TUSCANY

that she had announced the birth of the last successor to the Empire of Charlemagne.

We have seen how, after her return from Innsbruck, she was constrained by circumstances to resume her duties as Sovereign, but she did not contemplate more than an occasional appearance amongst her subjects. When, however, the death of her Bavarian daughter-in-law left the Court without social leadership, anything of the nature of strict retirement for the Empress-Queen was out of the question. No longer, as in bygone days, did she live in the eye of the public; but she was never inaccessible, and her Sunday receptions were a distinctive feature of the life of the Court.

Those who have recorded impressions of her in her later years always refer to the disfiguring traces of the illness which had also affected her eyesight and her general health. "In the drawing-room she used a glass to distinguish persons at a few paces distant from her." She had grown "large and heavy." "Her face was lacerated by the marks of the smallpox and the effects of a fall from her carriage. Nevertheless, it retains such an expression of goodness and benevolence that, when she smiles, her features for an instant almost become pleasing."

No one could forget that her life was spent in the shadow of a great bereavement. "Everything about her person was dark and mournful." The sombreness of her weeds was never modified. The apartments of her widowhood, on the third story of the Hofburg, were hung with black velvet or grey silk. Fortunately they had a southern exposure, and on fine days the sunshine, streaming through the open windows, made the interior less depressing. In winter the very aspect of the rooms caused a shiver. Seldom would their occupant consent to the lighting of a fire.

It was a trying state of things for her attendants and those who were received in audience. "The Emperor says he is almost frozen when he goes to see his mother. He is obliged to put on a fur coat in order to support the air of her apartment." Kaunitz alone had the temerity to close the windows when he came for an interview; but the Chancellor had to be taken on his own terms or not at all.

After 1772 he was the last prominent survivor of the group of remarkable men who had been associated with Maria Theresa in the building up of a monarchy infinitely more compact, stable, and progressive than the one she had inherited. Her steadfast trust in their ability and their integrity had spurred them on to great achievement. Her gratitude and friendship had been their reward. When their places were left vacant, she felt that they were still the company to which she belonged, and which she must shortly rejoin.

Meanwhile their passing had left her with a keen sense of loneliness. Others might be appointed to their posts, but she realized that the new generation had produced no such men as Bartenstein,[1] Haugwitz, Liechtenstein, Tarouca, and Van Swieten.

No outstanding service to the State was rendered by Count Silva-Tarouca. He had had his opportunities of advancement to high office, and had let them go. While Maria Theresa insisted on his attendance at Court in an undefined capacity, it was manifestly impossible for him to gratify ambition without giving rise to scandalous imputations. Often he had craved release from a task " odious and repressive." But there was certainly no one else who could have discharged it, and very few who would have consented to the sacrifices it entailed. So complete was Tarouca's self-effacement that it is only in recent studies of the period that his name occurs at all. Yet unquestionably he regulated the motion of the driving-wheel of the whole machinery of government.

In 1759, at the age of sixty-three, he resigned his last public office, that of President of the Council of Italian affairs. Thenceforward he lived in retirement, cheered by the constant and quite informal friendship of the Sovereign who still described herself as his pupil. When he was too feeble to come to Court, she went to see him. Her glad and sorrowful anniversaries never failed to bring a message from her " little scolding preceptor," or her " old and decrepit fault-finder." When he apologizes for the shakiness of his handwriting, she replies: " I was extremely pleased to see once more the writing of one to whom I probably owe any signs of prudence and moderation in my young years, and who is still my intimate friend, my Minister extraordinary."

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[1] Bartenstein died in 1767.

There is a delightful undated note from the Empress to Tarouca on one of his anniversaries. "I have not forgotten," she says, "that your little jewel of a Theresa[1] has come to celebrate your birthday. Great, fat Theresa unites with her in whole-hearted congratulations. She also wishes very sincerely all the good that you can desire, and —gifts which she cannot bestow, but which are now to be recognized as desirable for you—rest and philosophic tranquillity. These you will doubtless obtain more easily than your far too impatient pupil."

The most striking testimony to her appreciation of the service of Tarouca is her desire that a trustworthy counsellor should hold a similar position in the lives of her absent daughters. Only in the case of Marie Antoinette did the plan actually take shape. But the Empress was quite as anxious to appoint a guide to the Queen of Naples. In that case the Ambassador does not seem to have been adaptable for the purpose, and the King of Spain, fearing complications, negatived the proposal of a special adviser for his daughter-in-law.

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[1] Tarouca's daughter, a namesake and goddaughter of the Empress.

CHAPTER XXXIV

THE DEATH OF VAN SWIETEN—DISSOLUTION OF THE COMPANY OF JESUS—THE PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM—ABOLITION OF LEGAL TORTURE—VARIATIONS OF KAUNITZ

TO Van Swieten the eventide of life brought no respite from toil. Till the beginning of his last illness, he was in daily personal or written communication with the Sovereign, who shared so many of his ideals and ambitions. His going hence left her, as she herself says, with a great void in her existence, and utterly inconsolable.

Maria Theresa had known from the outset that he was a man by himself, who could have no real successor. Hence her anxiety if he happened to be at all out of health. Fortunately he had, like herself, been started in life with a robust constitution. Born with the century, he does not appear to have had any serious ailment till 1771, when he was for some days in a critical state. The Empress kept herself constantly informed of his condition. When recovery was assured, she wrote to him expressing heartfelt relief because "God is going to give you back in answer to our tears and prayers. If I had not received the good news just at the hour of vespers, I would have come to see you at once. I will certainly do so to-morrow between five and six in the evening; but I will send beforehand to know if that will be the right thing for you. For six-and-twenty years you have been studying our convenience. It is our turn now to study yours. If we can do so for a long time to come, it will make us exceedingly happy."

The return to health was only partial. Until the spring of 1772, Van Swieten was able to discharge a few of his multifarious duties. Then he was found to be suffering from a gangrene of the foot, soon pronounced incurable. In his residence at Schönbrunn he was still in touch with the Imperial Family, who lavished upon him every mark of attention.[1] Archduke Maximilian and his sisters Marianne and Elizabeth were present when their old friend received the last Sacraments. Maria Theresa had to forego her intention of accompanying them as she could not trust herself not to break down. But Van Swieten lived for nearly three weeks longer and she had other opportunities of giving renewed expression to her sympathy and gratitude. She was the last person to whom he spoke before sinking into unconsciousness.

From the time of his settlement in Austria, Van Swieten's energy was finding scope in at least five main directions. He had a full and happy domestic life. He had first found fame as an author, and the work in which he took most pride was five volumes of commentaries on the aphorisms of Boerhaave. The first two were published before he left Holland, the fifth was completed shortly before his death. He had the medical oversight of the Imperial Family and also of the pupils at the Theresianum. His prefecture of the Imperial Library led to his presidency of the Censorship Commission; his lectures on medical science to an intellectual awakening throughout the country, to Vienna's new and progressive university, and to the reform of the medical department of the army. It may well be asked if any man, even one with an insatiable appetite for work, could give a sufficient amount of attention to such numerous and responsible duties.

Maria Theresa's letters show that, in any case of illness in her household, she was impressed anew by Van Swieten's skill and devotion. But it must also be conceded that, in the ordinary course of things, the daily round of visits was apt to be unduly hurried, and the first symptoms of indisposition were not always promptly detected. It ought not to have been left to Maria Theresa and the cupping surgeon to find out what was really the matter with Empress Josepha.

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[1] Except the Emperor, whose grief for the death of his child made him refuse to hold any intercourse with the doctor who had failed to save her.

At the same time a mistake in diagnosis was very apt to occur in the case of a patient who was never without an eruption of some kind.

Van Swieten's distrust of inoculation was not, as has been stated, the outcome of wrong-headed prejudice, but of a justifiable and widely held scientific opinion. He was never inaccessible to new ideas, and it cannot be doubted that, but for demands that left him no margin of leisure, he would have found time for a thorough investigation of the subject, which De Haen's diatribes kept prominently in the foreground.

Towards the close of his life, Maria Theresa's physician was associated with her second successful endeavour to benefit the people of Hungary. There, as in Austria, the Counter-Reformation had given the Jesuits complete control of the schools. In both countries security of tenure led to the same relaxation of effort and the same mechanical curriculum. The so-called University of Tyrnau was little more than a dead-alive theological seminary. No medical department had ever been attached to it. The Empress-Queen had set her mind on extending to Hungary the educational advantages of the Austrian provinces, beginning with a well-equipped university. Hampered as usual by shortage of funds, she proposed, in the first instance, merely to ensure efficient theological and legal teaching at Tyrnau. But Van Swieten's remonstrances led to the installation of a medical school modelled on that of Vienna. So rapid was the increase of students that, in the course of a year or two, more spacious housing was required. Maria Theresa could not afford to erect another palatial building, but she took a very popular step when she transferred the Hungarian University to the ancient capital of Buda and established it in the unused royal residence.

Had Van Swieten lived one year longer, he would have had the satisfaction of seeing the educational institutions of his adopted country entirely freed from the stultifying influence of the Jesuits. He must, however, have known that their day was nearly over, as he heard of their expulsion from one kingdom after another. Political intrigues led to their banishment from Portugal in 1759. In France and Spain it came to be recognized that the absolute power of their General was a standing menace to the authority of the Crown. Both countries contrived to rid themselves of the Jesuits in 1767. The smaller Bourbon states adopted the same policy. Maria Theresa was given to understand that her allies expected her to join them in seeking the complete suppression of the Company of Jesus. Its partisans hoped for her assistance in saving it, and this would have been her own preference. But her co-Regent and her Chancellor were identified with the party demanding suppression. When everything depended on the choice of a new Pope, Joseph betook himself to Rome, and threw all his influence into the anti-Jesuitic scale. The result was the election of an avowed enemy of the Company, Cardinal Ganganelli, who became Clement XIV.

"The Empress was obliged to content herself with declaring her absolute neutrality in the quarrel, and her willingness, while doing nothing either for or against the Jesuits, to accept without question, as an obedient daughter of the Church, the decision of the Papal See. Thus, when in 1773 she was informed that the King of Spain actually held in his hand the Papal brief for the suppression of the Order, she could raise no further objection. But . . . she demanded the alteration of the clause which placed the confiscated property of the Jesuits in the hands of the Pope. Only upon condition that the property should fall to the State to be used for purposes of religion, would she acquiesce in the brief. The abolition of the Order, in the Habsburg countries, was effected without disturbance. The influence of the Empress secured gentle and liberal treatment for the members of the suppressed Society. Sufficient pensions were allotted to them; and of the residue of the wealth a fund was formed for the completion of certain educational reforms which Maria Theresa had much at heart."[1]

At last it had become possible to take thought for the educational needs of the young citizen, as distinguished from the predestined soldier, student, or civil servant. It was a long step downward from such an establishment as the Theresianum to the secondary schools which rival religious societies had multiplied out of all proportion to the needs of the country.

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[1] Bright. *Joseph II*, pp. 62–3.

The new regulations of 1753, which included the provision for periodical examinations, made it very evident that the days of the perfunctory teacher were numbered. Yet the Jesuits clung to their sixteenth-century methods, and slipshod Latin remained the staple of teaching in their institutions. The dissolution of their Society left the State in possession of the deserted gymnasia. The way was clear for the launching of a better system of education for the children of well-to-do parents.

Had Van Swieten still been alive, Maria Theresa might have been persuaded to rise to the height of her opportunity. As it happened, a scheme which had much to commend it, was utterly rejected because it was associated with secularization of school teaching. Other schemes were proposed, but in the end, though history, geography, and arithmetic were made compulsory, Latin continued to be the chief subject of instruction. It was the natural result of making the regular clergy predominant in the management of the schools.

But while children of the wealthier class reaped little benefit from the change of teachers, the introduction, in the year 1775, of a thoroughly practical system of elementary education calls for unstinted praise. As in the case of the Secondary Schools, there was much preliminary discussion. Scheme after scheme was submitted to the Empress, each with some flaw which led to its rejection. In the end it was decided to issue an invitation to Felbiger, Abbot of Sagan, in Silesia, an educational expert, whose methods had produced excellent results in various parts of the Empire. His services could not be obtained for a long period without application to the new ruler of Silesia. Frederick, however, declared himself happy to have the opportunity of proving his friendship for Her Majesty. He therefore placed no restriction on the length of Felbiger's stay in Austria.[1]

Having secured the help of a reformer in whom she believed, Maria Theresa "placed the task of organizing primary education unreservedly in his hands. He did not disappoint her expectations. In a very short time, by the suppression of certain small schools, by a careful selection of teachers, and by a wise course of study, he established in most of the provinces of the Empire a fairly successful organization. The threefold classification of schools was adopted. He placed in most of the large towns normal schools which should represent the perfection of the system, and a head school in the centre of each district, usually in the seat of some decayed Jesuit establishment; while the villages were supplied with primary schools in which the first elements of education were taught. The movement was energetically supported by the Empress."[1] She insisted that Hungary should partake in the advantages of the Felbiger system and of the improvement in secondary education. The admirable public schools of modern Hungary still receive benefit from the fund derived from the proceeds of confiscated Jesuit property. Maria Theresa's achievement has much in common with that of John Knox, when he applied monastic wealth to the establishment of an educational system in Scotland.

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[1] *See* Von Arneth, *Maria Theresia*, Vol. IX, p. 248.

At each of her country residences the Empress started a school for the children of her servants and of the workers on the estate. Teachers and pupils were kept up to the mark by the probability of Her Majesty's appearance at the viva voce examinations. If the youngsters failed to attend regularly, things were not made pleasant for the parents. The example of the monarch was followed by many of the wealthier nobles. Nothing was more likely to win Imperial favour than a reputation for educational enthusiasm. Not, however, till after her death was it known how near to the heart of Maria Theresa was the enlightenment of her people. During the last hours of her life she had added a codicil to her will, bequeathing a substantial legacy to the normal school fund, "with instructions that it should be utilized according to the advice of Felbiger, where it was most needed."

During the years when the Abbot of Sagan was elaborating and launching his scheme of public instruction, an agitation was in progress for the abolition of that hideous appendage of the Criminal Court—the torture chamber. The period associated with the reforming zeal of Haugwitz witnessed the appointment of commissions to prepare new codes of civil and criminal law. "The civil code produced in 1766 was not one of the most successful efforts of the Theresian epoch. Under Joseph II it had to be replaced by a new codification."

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[1] *Joseph II*, p. 69.

The *Nemesis Theresiana*, or Criminal Code, was a more satisfactory compilation. But when it was promulgated in 1768, the more humane element in the community deeply regretted the retention of judicial torture and the number of crimes still punishable by death.

In Sonnenfels, a shining light of the Legal Faculty, the victims of a lingering barbarism found a strong champion. Within and without the University, by speech and by writing, he urged the need of repeal. He addressed himself directly to the Empress and stirred up the consciences of the medical staff, whose opinion on such a subject had weight with Maria Theresa. In spite of her predilection for Sonnenfels whom, as the son of a converted Jew, she regarded as a brand plucked from the burning, the Empress resented the attack on her newly completed code. In 1772, she issued an injunction to the inconvenient agitator to keep the death penalty and torture out of his lectures and publications. He replied by a vigorous defence of the right of criticism. It was finally resolved to ascertain with regard to torture only, the opinion not merely of the Council of State, but of the governors and chief justices of Austria, Bohemia, and Moravia. Nearly all the provincial authorities advocated the restriction of torture, as a means of securing evidence, to such crimes as treason, false coinage, and robbery with violence. A majority of the Council of State, though not of the whole body of consultants, declared for abolition.

Maria Theresa was prepared to endorse the proposal of the Conservative party for the limitation of torture, when Joseph, who had hitherto reserved his opinion, intervened on the side of Sonnenfels and the abolitionists. His influence, seconded by that of Kaunitz, turned the scale. Hungary could only be reached through her own legislators.

But on January 2nd, 1776, legal torture was abolished in the Austrian provinces, in Bohemia, Moravia, and Galicia.

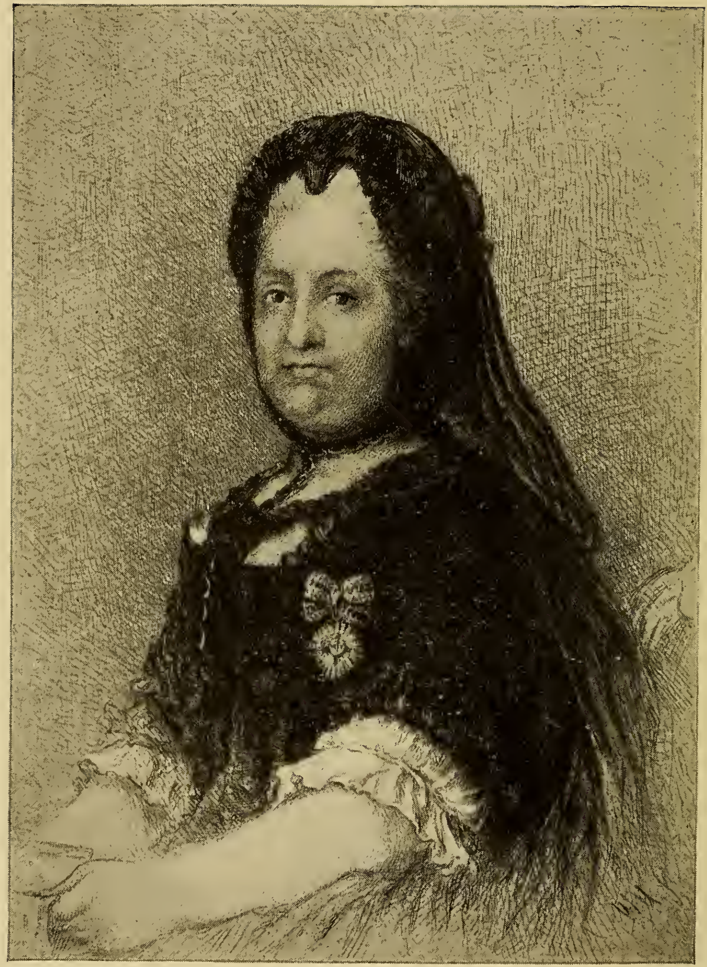
The restriction of the death penalty was not seriously considered in the reign of Maria Theresa. And travellers on their way to Vienna continued to shudder as they passed "a great many gibbets with men hanging on them, and heads exposed on wheels, ignobly placed near the road as a terror to robbers."

In so far as it depended on Maria Theresa, a cause was as good as won if it were championed by Kaunitz as well as the Emperor. The former had attained celebrity as a Foreign Minister, but it was not for nothing that he bore the more comprehensive title of State Chancellor. There was no great public question on which he was not competent to give an opinion. And, as time went on, matters which had formerly been submitted to the judgment of Haugwitz, Van Swieten, and others, came to be referred to Kaunitz, and Maria Theresa was ever the more convinced that there was no one whose advice was more worthy of acceptance, or who could so promptly suggest a way out of difficulties. He was several years older than herself, but circumstances had kept him abreast of the times, while his familiarity with different countries and conditions of life had given him a freedom from prejudice and breadth of view to which the Empress could lay no claim. His skill as a diplomatist was in constant demand, and a proposal that roused Her Majesty's suspicion, when tempestuously advocated by Joseph, might conceivably assume a different aspect when Kaunitz, in language purged of all intemperance, had given at least half a dozen reasons for supporting it.

The long, unbroken friendship between Maria Theresa and her Chancellor is the more remarkable, when we consider his absolute disregard of her standard of morality and his scant attention to religious observances. Also her scorn may be imagined if any one but Kaunitz had shown the same terror of infection and the same shrinking from any reference to the "time to die." After the epidemic of 1767 it came to be understood that "nothing allusive to the mortality of human nature must ever be rung in his ears, and that to mention the smallpox was enough to knock him up for the day."[1]

[1] Swinburne.

As he advanced in years he became more and more of a faddist in regard to his health. It may be safely inferred that, like many of his contemporaries, he had been impressed by a treatise on diet by Cornaro, a Venetian octogenarian. The English translation was entitled, *Sure and Certain Methods of attaining a Long and Healthy Life.* Presumably Kaunitz had a collection of similar works; for he certainly did not learn from Cornaro to clean his teeth before rising from table. Sir Henry Swinburne describes the process as "a nauseating operation that lasted a prodigious long time." He adds that the Chancellor, though not far short of seventy, was "full of childish vanities, and wished to be thought to excel in everything," especially it would seem in drawing champagne corks and mixing salads! Moreover, "he was dressed very oddly. In business, however, he was intelligent and far above any subterfuges and falsehoods. He was always silent when he did not choose to express his real sentiments." In a venal age he might well have been styled the "Incorruptible." He had also a better claim than the French Minister, Choiseul, to the title of "Cocher de l'Europe." His driving was disastrous to France and did not restore Silesia to Austria, but it certainly frustrated Frederick's ambition to make conquests in Bohemia.



Maria Theresa

MARIA THERESA IN LATER LIFE

CHAPTER XXXV

MARIA THERESA'S CORRESPONDENCE WITH HER CHILDREN—THE WAR OF THE BAVARIAN SUCCESSION

THERE is no dearth of first-hand impressions of Maria Theresa in her last decade. Her fame had so long been blown about Europe that tourists arrived in Vienna with whetted curiosity. With their letters of introduction they bustled around, seeking presentation at Court, engaging in conversation with exalted personages, or, in default of influence, with obscure citizens, and commonly swallowing facts and tittle-tattle with equal avidity. Their published letters and notes of travel throw interesting sidelights on the outward life of the Empress-Queen. But their answers to the question "What was she like as a woman?" must be taken with considerable reserve. Great, apparently, was the temptation to enlarge on her singularities to the neglect of every essential quality. Hence the partial, one-sided, sometimes repellent portraits that have found their way into circulation labelled "Maria Theresa."

Travellers who were chiefly struck by her assiduous attendance at religious services, her rigid observance of Lent, and other seasons of abstinence, and the devotional exercises to which she gave herself up on certain anniversaries, announced that "the Sovereign was quite sunk in the devotee." Others noted with surprise that the crusade against laxity of morals was continued when the death of the Emperor Francis had excluded the motive of personal jealousy. They inferred that the Empress must be excessively fond of scandalous detail, and the pictures they drew account for such representations of her as appear, for example, in George Sands' *Consuelo*.

Her letters, however, make it perfectly clear that only a mistaken sense of public duty could have induced Maria Theresa to listen to reports of individual shortcoming. She takes her son Ferdinand sternly to task for opening a communication not addressed to him. "Even a letter to a servant should be sacred," she says. "We have no right to the secrets of other people. Spying is barely permissible in the service of the State."

Yet another distorted impression is that of Maria Theresa as a domineering mother, laying down the law to daughters no longer young. This seems to have originated in a too literal acceptance of the half-playful, half-petulant comments of Archduchess Elizabeth on the dulness of her life. But we have seen that the eldest Archduchess refused to leave her mother even for a time, and obviously had no difficulty in pursuing an independent course. On days of special sanctity, Elizabeth, as the more robust of the two sisters, was doubtless liable to the necessity of accompanying her mother to a maximum of religious ceremonies, otherwise she was as free to follow her own bent as Marianne. The Empress saw her daughters in the morning if they happened to attend the same Mass, otherwise they did not, as a rule, hold any intercourse till the day was far advanced.

In her later years Maria Theresa slept badly. To lie awake seemed to her a sheer waste of time. Going to rest at ten, she frequently wakened soon after midnight, wrote letters till she became drowsy, and then returned to bed, rising as usual at five. At six o'clock she still heard Mass, afterwards working till close on noon. Towards the hour when she had formerly taken time to see her children, she now attended a second Mass. To save time she dined alone. The afternoons not devoted to public business were spent in writing to the absent members of her family. Each had a letter from her once a fortnight. If the recipient were in Paris or Naples it took a fortnight to arrive, a month before the answer could be expected.

In the Hofburg, at Vienna, there is a charming miniature of the Empress-Queen in her widow's weeds, seated at her writing-table. Quill in hand, she has looked up for a moment, with the radiant expression of one who is holding pleasant converse by word of mouth rather than by pen. It need hardly be remarked that, in her letters to her children, the didactic strain prevailed. But there were also letters which contained no word of admonition—letters of congratulation, of thanks for felicitations received, of warm interest in domestic occurrences, inquiries concerning the teething of the last baby, or the inoculation of the older grandchildren, requests for hospitality to travelling friends, chronicles of the daily happenings in Vienna, Schönbrunn, or Laxenburg; and, as the years roll past, more and more frequent references to her own failure in health.

Of this vast family correspondence, only fragments have been preserved. When their immediate purpose was fulfilled, the Empress destroyed the letters from all her children but two. Those she kept were written by Joseph and Marie Antoinette. Her sons and daughters obeyed in the main her oft-repeated injunction to burn her own letters, but most of them treasured a few. Joseph and Marie Antoinette retained a great many, while Ferdinand and his consort clung to their whole store. In these various groups of letters we come indeed face to face with the real Maria Theresa.

Many a time she must have smiled over the reading and answering of communications from her younger daughter-in-law. Long before the marriage of Ferdinand his mother was in correspondence with Marie Beatrix d'Este. Indeed, we may almost see the older woman untying her apron-string that the Prince may be more firmly tethered to that of the wife five years older than himself. Though Madam Beatrix kept a jealous eye on the doings of her husband, she was a vivacious and lovable yokefellow. Neither to her nor to his mother did Ferdinand give much cause for uneasiness. As compared with the ebullient state of things in Parma, the rule of the young representatives of Milan and Modena seemed to exemplify all the virtues in unison.

It cannot be doubted that the Empress wrote with equal regularity to both daughters-in-law. "The Incomparable" is her own name for the mother of Leopold's goodly array of sons. Yet the overflowing affection that appears in every reference to Marie Beatrix is subdued when she comes to speak of Marie Louise. To the former she could say, "I do not look upon you as a daughter-in-law, but as my own daughter. As such you have given me every reason to love you."

Maria Theresa's birthday brought her into touch with all her children at once. On May 13th, 1776, she writes to Ferdinand and Beatrix: "Here we are at Laxenburg, in the most beautiful weather. Your dear letters and good wishes came just when we were at breakfast under the trees in the garden—the Emperor, that is to say, and my two daughters and myself." The outdoor life was continued during the summer, but by the month of August the Empress had begun to pay the penalty of recklessly exposing herself to damp and draughts. A rheumatic swelling of the right arm interfered sadly with her correspondence. Great was her satisfaction when she regained the use of her "wretched paw." But as she constantly forgot to take precautions she was never long free from rheumatism, and withal came toothache and painful inflammation of the face and eyes. "I am getting old at a furious rate" is her comment on the recurrent ailments.

In a very chastened mood she acknowledges the greetings from Milan for her sixtieth birthday (May 13th, 1777): "Your good wishes, your anxiety about my health, might reanimate a corpse. For your satisfaction be it known unto you that I am quite well again: somewhat wanting in strength, to be sure, and by no means jubilant as I think of my sixty years and what they stand for. . . . You wish my days prolonged. I would remind you of the restrictions of my life, and of the terrible account to be rendered at the last, an account that grows heavier day by day. There is nothing to be gained by growing old: you become slack in your duties, and have always to be making excuses for yourself; you lose ground and do not regain it. Nevertheless, at the moment I feel ready to resign myself to all the drawbacks. For your sakes I will try to keep alive a tender mother and friend, who has no thought save for your welfare, and to give you love in return for all you give to her."

The talk of resignation failed to reassure Beatrix. To her renewed expression of anxiety her mother-in-law replies: "I love you so dearly that I assure you I will take care of myself. I will even coddle myself to rid you of uneasiness. Only a powerful motive could make me promise *that*."

The family of Ferdinand, like those of Leopold, Caroline, and Marie Antoinette, led off with a namesake of the Empress. At the age of five Theresa of Modena delighted her grandmother with an original birthday letter. The child's mother is assured that "the charming letter of dear Theresa is astonishing for her age, and you are right in thinking that I would rather have a few lines of her own composition than a sheaf of compliments. I beg of you not to overburden her with lessons." The upbringing of children is a frequent topic in the correspondence with Beatrix. "I am glad," writes the Empress, "that you are going to Lake Garda. You will find the Duke and Duchess of Gloucester,[1] who are spending the summer there. They have two children, who usually go about bareheaded and without stockings, the girl with her hair cut short on her forehead, like a boy. It is a style that I dislike exceedingly. The Princess de Ligne is here with a girl of four in similar guise. It is really going too far. Next thing we shall see children with no clothes at all, running about like negroes. Everything is carried to extremes nowadays. That is the rock on which this enlightened age will make shipwreck." Who shall say that we have nothing in common with the eighteenth century while bare-legged, hatless children proclaim the inexhaustible influence of Rousseau?

That Maria Theresa's scorn for eccentric innovations did not imply any liking for fussiness in children's garments is evident from her criticism of the first portrait of Theresa of Modena. "The long-desired picture of my dear little granddaughter has this moment arrived. . . . Why did you have the little one painted in such a frightful cap? Nothing is prettier than the head, the brow, the hair of children, and a simple round cap, with no ornamentation of lace or ribbons, is what suits them best. Forgive the comparison, but this child's cap reminds me of the periwig of her worthy grandfather. In fine, 'tis a villainous painting, but the subject is charming and dear and interesting, and a cause of great joy to me."

Maria Theresa was innocent of any qualification to pose as a critic of pictorial art, but she knew a good likeness when she saw it, and no gifts delighted her more than portraits of her children and grandchildren. To Marie Christine, who had gone with her husband to Italy, the Empress writes from Vienna: "Lacy has just been with me. He found me surrounded by three Mimis and two Alberts. I have the portraits from Schönbrunn here, as well as your new one, which Lacy thought admirable, and so does every one else."

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[1] The Duke, a brother of George III, married the widowed Countess of Waldegrave. It was one of the unions which led to the passing of the Royal Marriage Act.

"My dear daughter and friend" is a favourite beginning of the letters to Mimi, who was sadly missed during her winter in Italy. There is a reminiscence of personal experience in the expression of fear lest this dearest member of her family should suffer from the cold of Florence. "I should be sorry," says the mother, "if little Mimi got chilblains and could not go walking as usual." The apprehension will not seem groundless to those who have learned that going south does not invariably mean getting warm.

Viewed through the mists of nearly forty years, Maria Theresa's own visit to Italy seemed strangely remote and unreal. She scarcely recognized herself in the buoyant young Princess with her husband by her side, and all her career before her, who had welcomed the return of spring to the City of Flowers. Her power of movement was becoming more and more restricted. As in the case of her mother, a chronic form of dropsy had caused her to become "enormously fat and unwieldy." On the slightest exertion she suffered from difficulty of breathing. In all her palaces there had to be some device to save her going up and down stairs. Caroline Pichler, the daughter of her former reader and tirewoman, Caroline Hieronymus, tells how, as a child, she sometimes visited Laxenburg with her parents. The reward of a good little girl was permission to stand between the Empress and her mother when they were seated on a sofa, which by some mechanical contrivance could be raised to the upper story or lowered to the ground-floor.

In the Hofburg a trap-door was introduced above the chapel on the second story, so that the Empress could hear Mass without leaving her apartments. At Schönbrunn the ground-floor was adapted for every purpose. There, on a fine summer morning, a stout figure in black, with a box of State papers buckled to her waist, might have been seen moving slowly to "a covered walk in the garden," where she spent her working day. In the summer of 1778 she could still say, "My health is well maintained; but I do not get any thinner, though I hardly ever partake of soup or meat. I live on fruit and vegetables, and when I am tired I sleep, like the dogs, at any hour of the day or night."

The tendency to fall asleep in the daytime was not due to any failure of mental power, but to the strain of a great anxiety, which robbed her of her limited capacity for resting at night. When she closed her eyes she could only see four armies facing one another in Bohemia. Two were her own, under the command of the Emperor and of Laudon. The invading armies were Prussian, the one led by Frederick himself, the other by his brother, Prince Henry.

The renewal of strife between Austria and Prussia was the outcome of Joseph's endeavour to make himself master of Bavaria, by methods similar to those which Frederick had employed in order to establish himself in Silesia. The childless Maximilian of Bavaria died in the end of 1777. "Charles Theodore of the Palatinate was the next representative of the common ancestor of the Bavarian and Palatinate branches of the House of Wittelsbach. But Charles Theodore was also without legitimate heirs, and cared very little for Bavaria."[1] He was particularly anxious to safeguard recently acquired dominions on the Rhine from Frederick of Prussia, whom he suspected of designs upon them. He was, therefore, not unwilling to recognize the insubstantial Austrian claims to portions of the Bavarian inheritance in return for a guarantee of the remainder and of the Rhenish provinces. In order to give the transaction a semblance of regularity it was embodied in a Convention.

To Maria Theresa any attempt to "play the Prussian" was abhorrent, and she pointed out the danger of the course on which her son had embarked. Her warnings fell on deaf ears. The game of bluff would have stood a better chance of success, if Austrian troops had not been marched into Bavaria before the formalities in regard to the Convention were complete. It had, indeed, been signed by the Elector Palatine, but it was essential that it should also be endorsed by his presumptive heir, Duke Charles of Zweibrücken. The Duke had no inclination to oblige the Court which had frustrated his hope of marrying Archduchess Amelia. At the first hint of support from Frederick the Great he withdrew his sulky promise to sign the agreement, and appealed to the Imperial Diet to uphold the integrity of Bavaria. Thus it came about that Austria was faced with the alternative of evacuating the Electoral dominions, or maintaining her position in the teeth of Prussia as champion of the aggrieved Prince of the Empire.

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[1] *A History of Germany, 1715–1815*, p. 311.

With the powerful Austrian army at his back Joseph felt himself a match for Prussia alone. But Frederick had contrived to be beforehand with Austria at the Court of St. Petersburg. Only as long as the Czarina was preoccupied with the Turks could the Emperor count on having to deal with a single enemy. This was the moment for testing the value of the vaunted Bourbon Alliance.

But France, on the verge of a war with England, maintained that she was not pledged to assistance save in defence of her ally's hereditary possessions. Looking ahead, Maria Theresa saw the heritage she had spent her life in guarding ruthlessly sacrificed to aspirations with which she was not in sympathy. She would fain have bespoken the mediation of a friendly Power to end the state of tension without going to war.

Paltry in the last degree seemed to her the objections about what would be said of her if Austria were to give way. A notable letter to Joseph, on March 14th, 1778, begins thus: "The inconveniences and dangers which I foresaw from the moment when we sent troops into Bavaria have now become serious realities, and I should be unworthy of the name of monarch or mother if I did not take measures fitted to the circumstances, without heeding what may be said about myself. We are threatened with nothing less than the overthrow of our dynasty and of the monarchy, in all probability with a complete revolution of Europe. To ward off such disasters no sacrifice is too great. I will not even shrink from the vilifying of my name. Let them call me dotard, coward, fool, nothing shall prevent me from extricating Europe from this most menacing position." After reviewing the whole situation and pointing out the risks to which every portion of her dominions would be subjected, she concludes: "I have not written this in ill-temper, or from faint-heartedness. My courage is as strong as it was thirty years ago, but I will not lend a hand in striking at the foundations of my throne."

Insight, sagacity, common sense, were all on the side of the Empress. Her voice had no uncertain sound. Yet, like another Cassandra, she was doomed to realize the futility of her predictions. When the methods of diplomacy were exhausted, and war was staring her in the face, she did not seek to shift the blame to the King of Prussia. Joseph is told that "unfortunately it is we who are at fault, for we will not speak out clearly. And we cannot speak out, because we desire that to which we have no right, and which we have been hoping to gain by chance of circumstance."

The chance on which the Emperor and Kaunitz had most confidently reckoned was Frederick's manifest reluctance to take up arms if a settlement could be effected otherwise. Not till the Prussians had invaded Bohemia was Joseph convinced that the old King's craving for peace was exceeded by his determination to keep the power of Austria in check. The letter in which her son admitted his disillusion was unfortunately misinterpreted by Maria Theresa. There seemed no room for doubt that the eleventh hour was past, yet she jumped to the conclusion that Joseph would now be as thankful as herself if the struggle could be arrested. On her sole authority she sent off an envoy to Frederick to renew negotiations. Her precipitancy caused the only dangerous breach that ever occurred between herself and her son. Infuriated by a step which seemed to lay him open to a charge of cowardice, Joseph poured forth reproaches, and threatened to throw up the command and retire into Italy without going near Vienna.

Fortunately he could take no steps without consultation with Laudon, and the wise and tactful counsel of the older commander pacified the younger, and kept him at his post. Maria Theresa's intervention was not so infelicitous as at first appeared. It did not bring her immediate peace, but by delaying the advance of the Prussian army it gave the Austrians time to take up an almost impregnable position, and to devastate the country between them and the enemy. Shortage of provisions and an outbreak of disease forced King Frederick to withdraw into winter quarters without risking a battle.

Preparations for a spring campaign were carried on briskly in both camps, but the chance of future victory was all on the side of Prussia. For the Russo-Turkish struggle was at an end, and the Czarina was preparing to give active help to her ally. The diplomatists were therefore kept at work, and the result was a conference at Teschen early in the New Year. Maria Theresa naturally desired that France should be the mediating Power. Frederick, however, contrived that Russia should become, for the first time, the arbiter of Europe.

By the Peace of Teschen Bavaria passed almost intact to the Elector Palatine and his heirs. Austria's only gain of territory was the strip of land between the Danube on the north, the Inn on the east, and the Salza on the south. It was a desirable link between Upper Austria and Tyrol, though but a slight return for the expenditure of the campaign and a certain loss of prestige. The peace which the Empress-Queen had so fervently desired to maintain was restored to her on her sixty-second birthday, May 13th, 1779.

One last passage of arms between her and her great antagonist remains to be chronicled. It was the outcome of her resolution to procure for her son Maximilian the office of Coadjutor to the Elector of Cologne. She had dreamed of a distinguished military career for her youngest-born, and had made various provisions for his maintenance. He was to succeed his uncle Charles as Grand Master of the Teutonic Order; and when Uncle Charles went the way of all flesh, and Marie and Prince Albert held sway in the Netherlands, Maximilian was to be Lieutenant-Governor of Hungary.

In addition to the usual course of study he had the exceptional advantage of a lengthy period of travel. One after another he visited the Courts of the brothers and sisters who had not seen him since childhood. Their letters show a kindly desire to express the appreciation that would give pleasure to their mother, but they could not conceal their disapproval of the Archduke's tactlessness and indecision of character. Indeed, the verdict of the sagacious Leopold almost tallies with that of Sir Henry Swinburne, that "Maximilian was a good-natured, neither here nor there kind of youth."[1]

By the time he was twenty-three the Empress had become aware that it was no use urging him to emulate Prince Eugene and other great warriors. But the proposal to turn him into a Churchman and make him Coadjutor to an ecclesiastical Elector in the Archbishopric of Cologne and the Bishopric of Münster roused all King Frederick's antipathy to any extension of Habsburg influence. He strove hard to secure the election of a rival candidate, Prince Joseph Hohenlohe. But in this final encounter the Empress-Queen came off victorious. Through the influence of Marie Antoinette she had obtained the support of France, through the influence of Joseph the support of Russia. In August, 1780, Maximilian was elected both in Cologne and Münster.

The friendly attitude of the Czarina was due to the fact that the Emperor chanced to be her guest at the critical period in his brother's candidature. Maria Theresa had strongly opposed this latest development in what she regarded as a craze for travelling. But Joseph perceived very clearly that in his attempt on Bavaria he had not been foiled by the army of Frederick, but by having nothing to oppose to the power of Russia in the background. As for the French Alliance, he had long suspected that its advantages were overrated, and his mother's plea that his proposed visit to the Czarina would wound the susceptibilities of France, did not weigh with him in the least. Neither, of course, did her disapproval of his association with a woman of the type of Catherine. He was convinced that only personal intercourse could do away with the antipathy to Austria which Frederick had fostered at the Russian Court.

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[1] *Memoirs of the Courts of Europe.*

Catherine at once agreed to the proposal of a meeting with the Emperor during her impending tour in Russian Poland. The King of Prussia's warnings led her to expect a grasping, overbearing despot. She was surprised and delighted to find a visitor whose intellectual brilliancy was combined with the unusual charm of perfect naturalness; one, moreover, who travelled incognito and made no demand for elaborate entertainment. On the contrary, he laid himself out to entertain and amuse his hostess, and did it so successfully that when the visit came to its appointed term she would not hear of his departure, and proposed that he should accompany her to her capital. The Emperor, gratified to perceive that the wall of prejudice was toppling over, accepted the invitation, and, to his mother's dismay, spent three weeks in St. Petersburg. He wisely abstained from any attempt to bring about a definite political agreement. It was enough for his purpose that he could leave the way open for the negotiation of a Russian Alliance if the need for it should arise. The consciousness that he was "stirring up the bile" of Frederick the Great gave a malicious piquancy to an experience which he thoroughly enjoyed.

CHAPTER XXXVI

THE LAST DAYS OF MARIA THERESA

"I was ever a fighter, so—one fight more,
The best and the last!
I would hate that Death bandaged my eyes, and forbore,
And bade me creep past."
BROWNING

JOSEPH returned to Vienna to find that his mother's pleasure in the installation of Maximilian had been partially eclipsed by the death of Prince Charles of Lorraine. Princess Charlotte had predeceased her brother. He was therefore the last of Maria Theresa's kindred, of the same generation as herself. She looked upon his departure as a summons to put her own house in order.

She was younger than her brother-in-law, and well within the three score years and ten. But throughout her public career, she had lived at high physical and mental pressure. The number of her days had little to do with the age of a woman who had given birth to sixteen children, who had never shirked the tremendous labour and responsibility of her calling, who had endured the additional strain of two prolonged and critical wars, of a series of desolating bereavements, and of an illness which had robbed her of all her reserve force. Not without cause had she grown "weary with the march of life." Her letters reveal an ever-present dread lest she should become totally helpless. In May, 1780, she confides to Beatrix that she had much writing that ought to be done at once, "but my hands will no longer serve me. I am afraid of losing the use of them. It would be particularly awkward on account of my weight. No one would be able to move me." About the same time, her daughter Marie remarked that her mother was almost as breathless after a walk on level ground as she had formerly been when going up and down stairs.

The thought of Marie's departure for Brussels was so distressing to the Empress, that it was postponed till the spring of the following year. Thereupon Joseph announced that he would utilize the interval by making a tour of inspection in the Netherlands. At the same time he proposed to see something of England and Holland.

At the mention of England, his mother's religious prejudice was up in arms. The extraordinary outburst of anti-Catholic frenzy, known as the Gordon Riots, was a topic of the hour. Maria Theresa would scarcely have been human if she had not exclaimed, "This is what comes of the tolerance that is always being preached to me." To Marie Antoinette she wrote that "the events in London were unheard of in a civilized country. That is what comes of their vaunted freedom, their quite unique legislative system. Stability cannot exist apart from religion and morality." "The English," she said to Joseph, "are nearly all deists, infidels, and freethinkers. I tremble lest intercourse with such a nation should shake your belief in everything sacred amongst Catholics." The preacher of tolerance was quite able to discriminate between the mote of a passing tumult and the beam of systematic persecution in Hungary and Moravia. He doubtless urged the unlikelihood of sudden change of belief on the part of a man verging on forty. But nothing short of a promise to forego the visit to the nation which had done so much to establish her on her throne, could restore his mother's peace of mind.

In the shortening days of 1780 Maria Theresa was again troubled with pain and stiffness in her arms. But as she still dwelt in a cave of the winds, no one was surprised at the recurrence of rheumatism and of a cough which had troubled her in previous winters. On October 20th, she celebrated the fortieth anniversary of her accession. On All Souls' Day (Nov. 2nd) she made her usual pilgrimage to the vault in the Capuchin Church. A week later she drove to Schönbrunn, where the Emperor had assembled a shooting party. The weather was unsettled, she caught a slight chill, and the cough became more troublesome. On the 18th she wrote to Marie in Pressburg, that she had spent the day on the sofa, suffering from cold in her head and difficulty in breathing, "but no fever, nothing of consequence." On the 20th she reassures her daughter by stating that she had been equal to the routine of the day, had finished all her letters for the post, and had also been relieved by a copious bleeding. She had overruled her doctor's objections to the bleeding, but they were justified by a perceptible weakening of her heart's action. Thenceforward the fits of coughing and threatened suffocation became alarming. She no longer attempted to go to bed, but slept in her chair or on her sofa. On the 24th, when Prince Albert and Marie arrived in Vienna, there was no further doubt of the gravity of the illness. On the 26th the Empress informed Joseph of her intention to receive the last rites of the Church before the close of the day. Hitherto he had obstinately refused to accept the serious verdict of Van Swieten's favourite pupil, Dr. Anton Störck. That was not, however, astonishing; for even his less optimistic brother and sisters had moments of hope, when they saw their mother sitting up, fully dressed, and at intervals reading and signing papers.

At her son's request, she consented to postpone Extreme Unction and simply receive the Sacrament. But that his anxiety was aroused is evident from the more disquieting reports which he sent to the scattered members of the family. He also spent the night in the ante-chamber of his mother's room, from time to time going in to see her. Sometimes he found her battling with the terrible difficulty of breathing, sometimes quietly writing to the children who were far away. Seldom has the approach of death caused so little deviation from normal conditions as in the case of Maria Theresa. With her mind perfectly clear, she occupied the moments of comparative relief from suffering, in ordinary work and in intercourse with her children, which she strove to make as natural as possible.

The doctor was charged to warn her when the last rite could no longer be safely put off. In the early hours of November 28th, he informed her that the time had come. She desired that the sons and daughters under her roof should be told of the forthcoming ceremony, but they were to feel no obligation to attend, if it would be too painful for them.

Nevertheless, she was gratified that they were all present —the Emperor, Maximilian newly returned from his journey to Cologne, Marianne, Elizabeth, Marie and her husband. It was four o'clock on a morning, dark with the gloom of November, chilly and depressing in the room with its neutral-tinted hangings and its flickering candlelight. Still, it was no unfitting background for the dignified figure in the arm-chair—serene, austere, self-controlled, a traveller awaiting her viaticum, but none the less a queen.

Her setting-forth was delayed until the following day. There was time for many a kindly word to those she was leaving behind. The sons and daughters, who had knelt beside her as she received the last rite, were recalled to her room shortly afterwards. One and all received her thanks for the love they had borne her and such counsel and encouragement as she still had strength to bestow. To the colleague of the past fifteen years, soon to be sole Regent, she committed the welfare of his brothers and sisters. Prince Albert states that he had never seen a man so overcome with grief as the Emperor at this moment of solemn leave-taking. He knelt at his mother's feet, kissing her hands till, in the old familiar way, she turned his face to hers and kissed his forehead.

The one thing that Maria Theresa could not bear was to witness the sorrow of those who were dearest to her. When each member of the family had received the maternal kiss and blessing they were told "to retire to another apartment and recover their spirits." But Joseph was speedily brought back to assist his mother's final preparations. To more than one document she affixed her signature. She wrote a letter full of gratitude to Kaunitz. "She commissioned Count Esterhazy, the Hungarian Chancellor, to thank his countrymen for their fidelity and zeal, which had secured her throne; and to entreat them to continue the same to her successor." In spite of the recurrent fits of choking, it seemed impossible that her life was merely a question of hours.

But when she had bidden farewell to all the members of her suite, and commended their interests to the care of her eldest son, the brief revival of strength was over. Yet notwithstanding her weakness and suffering, nightfall found her still sitting amongst her children, making brave attempts at conversation. Her exhausted appearance led some one to suggest that she should try to sleep. "You would have me sleep," she replied, "when at any minute I may be summoned before my Judge? I do not want to fall asleep and be taken unawares. These fifteen years I have been getting ready for Death. I will meet him awake."

When the little company dispersed, the Emperor stayed on for the last night-watch beside his mother. At three o'clock the ebbing tide showed signs of flowing again. With reassuring distinctness Joseph was told to call Maximilian and then go and rest. At five he was invited back to have breakfast, probably the usual coffee, with the Empress. Her other children paid their morning visit. All except Marianne were dismissed at six o'clock to go to Mass. Her sons had occupied Maria Theresa's attention during the night. In the early morning she had brief interviews with her daughters. When Marie was joined by Prince Albert, the Empress remarked that, in bringing about their happy marriage, she had achieved at least one unqualified success.

The thought of herself as a traveller was still present to her mind. When gusts of wind drove the rain through her open windows she observed that it was bad weather for the great journey. As the morning wore on, it became clear to every one that it was indeed the last day. To spare her daughters the pain of witnessing her departure, Maria Theresa decided that, when they took leave of her at ten o'clock, they should not return to the apartment which had been more of a workroom than a sick-room.

Despite the weary struggle for breath, a few more documents were signed, a few more last charges given to Joseph in a voice that had grown very weak. Evening brought the usual agonizing climax. Störck offered a sedative, but the Empress put it aside, saying she feared it might prolong her life, and that she did not desire, for it was killing her children to see her suffer. But Störck was duly thanked, and told that there was one thing he could still do for her. When the end came, he was to close her eyes and save the Emperor what would give him more pain than anything else.

Towards nine o'clock the heroic conflict seemed nearly over. The longing for air had prompted the characteristic inquiry if the windows were open. Reassured on this point, Maria Theresa suddenly rose to her feet, and with a final effort for relief staggered from her chair to her sofa. Help was at hand as she sank down on the edge of the only bed she had known for over a week. She could still render some assistance as she was lifted on to the couch. Joseph expressed the fear that she was not yet resting comfortably. " Comfortable enough to die," she answered, and a moment later the last journey had begun.

CONCLUSION

MARIA THERESA'S greatness needs no further attestation than that of a reign which, taken all in all, is one long record of progress. That it was unequal progress goes without saying. In certain directions it is scarcely discernible. In others the way of advance is deliberately blocked. But even the checks imposed from narrow and arbitrary motives did something to prevent dissipation of energy. And the history of the ensuing reign proves that, in the Habsburg dominions, the chariot of reform could never be driven at a gallop.

Maria Theresa's limitations make her none the less worthy to be the heroine of a nation's history. To the guarantors of her inheritance her accession was but "a flaming opportunity"[1] for glutting themselves with her possessions. Her genius made it "a flaming opportunity" for moving antagonistic races to a common enthusiasm and uniting them for her defence. There was genius, too, in the swift perception that the vindication of her rights was only half the battle. She had to render herself immune from further attack. Hence the peaceful revolution which brought the remotest provinces of her realm into touch with the central authority. Hence the inauguration of military, financial, educational, and judicial reforms. Benevolence rather than ambition prompted efforts for the spread of popular education, and the founding of institutions for the care of the sick, of homeless orphans, of the aged poor. Can we wonder that the "halcyon days of Maria Theresa are still proverbial throughout the whole extent of the Austrian dominions?"[2]

Her sculptured form on its lofty throne faces the palace where she drew her first breath and her last. Her left hand keeps firm hold of the sceptre and the scroll of the Pragmatic Sanction. Her right points downwards to the great constellation of generals and statesmen whose deeds shed lustre on her reign. The horsemen in front of the throne are Daun and Laudon; those at the back are Khevenhüller and Traun, victors respectively in the Seven Years' War and the War of the Austrian Succession. One figure stands out prominently from the group of statuary in front of the pedestal—it is Kaunitz. Behind him may be seen Bartenstein and the two great diplomatists, Starhemberg and Mercy-Argenteau. On the other three sides, positions equivalent to that of Kaunitz are given to Liechtenstein, Haugwitz, and Van Swieten. The monument is a fitting summary of the most brilliant chapter in the story of a nation.

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[1] Carlyle.

[2] Coxe, Vol. III, p. 483.

Recent days have witnessed the unveiling of a national monument to another famous queen. Less than forty years separate the death of Maria Theresa from the birth of Victoria. From the historical point of view their reigns have little in common, yet the characters of the women to whom successive centuries did homage were cast in such similar moulds that it may be questioned if the course of events would have been essentially different had the one been in the place of the other. Even in their upbringing there are points of resemblance, for the heiress to the British Crown spent her youth in an eighteenth-century atmosphere, and under the influence of German traditions. In the dawn of womanhood both were summoned to a task which had taxed the resources of generations of men. Both were actuated by a profound conviction of the sacredness of their calling, and dedicated themselves to its duties in a spirit of high seriousness. "To-morrow will be a terrible day for me," writes Maria Theresa in 1777, on the eve of the anniversary of her accession. "What account can I render for thirty-seven years of sovereignty?"

Klopstock's ode on the death of the Empress-Queen proclaims her "the greatest of her race—greatest because most human." In her humanity how near she comes to the celebrated queen of the nineteenth century. The one was as sure as the other that her red-letter day *par excellence* was the February day on which she was married. Their affection for their own families overflowed to the households of their friends. Both queens proved themselves capable of staunch and enduring friendship. By associating the crown with a high moral standard, both exerted an elevating influence on the social life of their times.

Human in her virtues, Maria Theresa was no less human in her faults and blunders and inconsistencies. Neither her reason nor her common sense could stand against her more violent prejudices. The bigoted, inquisitorial side of her character was condemned by the public opinion of her own not very tolerant day. We must, however, beware of confusing a perverted sense of duty with moral delinquency. It is significant that one who never indulged in complacent retrospect was able to say at the last that she had tried to do the right thing. She walked according to her light. Like that of other mortals it burned dimly at times, yet she never lost sight of the ideals of her youth. Thus

> "*Her* track across the fretful foam
> Of vehement action without scope or term
> Called history, keeps a splendour, due to wit
> Which saw one clue to life and followed it."[1]

By that clear vision of destiny Maria Theresa was enabled to frustrate the enemies who, in the beginning of her reign, came out to see a reed shaken in the wind, and finally to raise the House of Habsburg to a degree of power which it had not known since the days of Charles V. "Let not, therefore, her frailties be remembered: she was a very great woman."[2]

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[1] Matthew Arnold.

[2] An adaptation of Dr. Johnson's verdict on Goldsmith.

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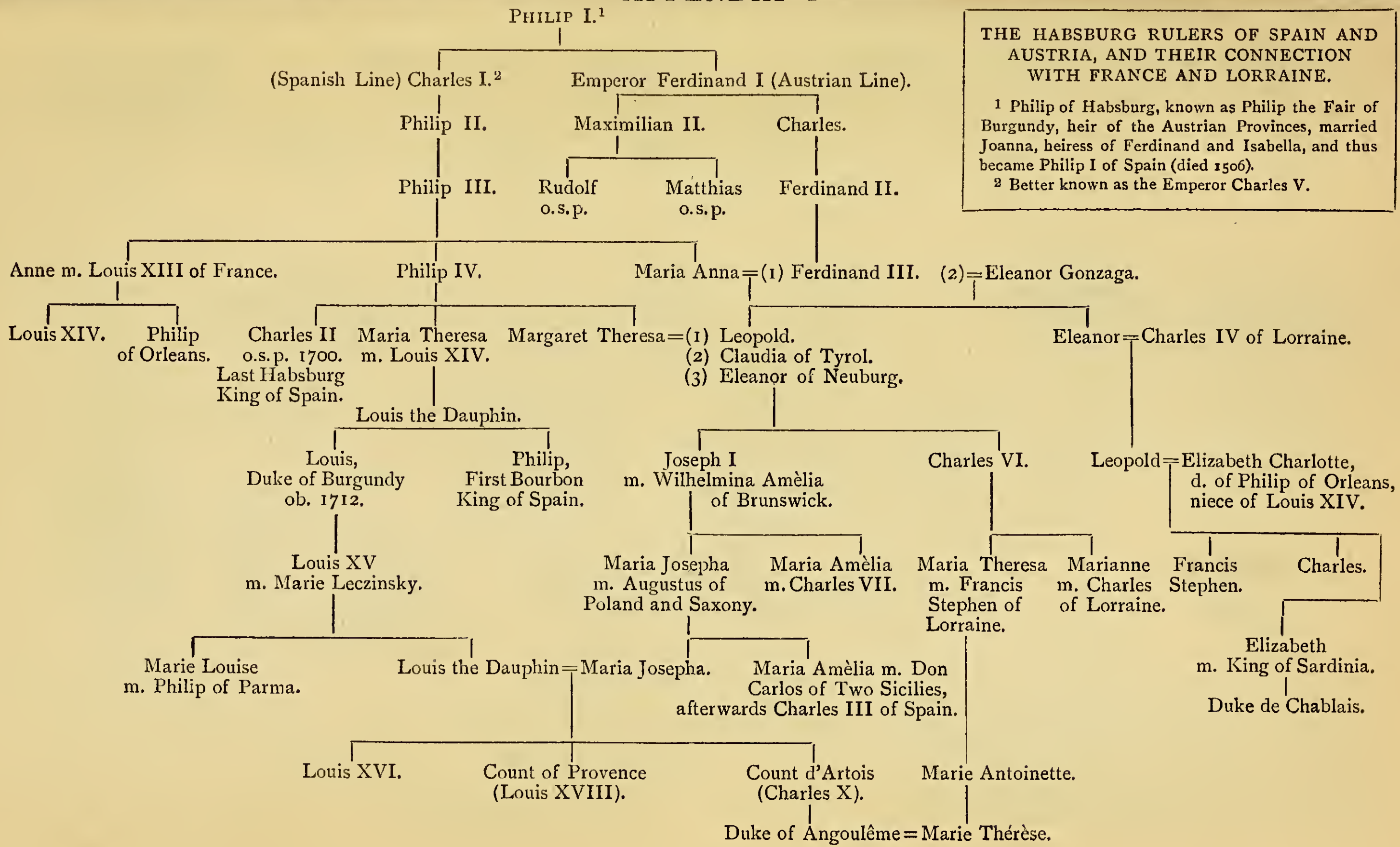
APPENDIX I

THE HABSBURG RULERS OF SPAIN AND AUSTRIA, AND THEIR CONNECTION WITH FRANCE AND LORRAINE.


PHILIP I.[1]
(Spanish Line) Charles I.[2]
Emperor Ferdinand I (Austrian Line).
Philip II.
Maximilian II.
Charles.
Philip III.
Rudolf o.s.p.
Matthias o.s.p.
Ferdinand II.
Anne m. Louis XIII of France.
Philip IV.
Maria Anna=(1) Ferdinand III. (2)=Eleanor Gonzaga.
Louis XIV.
Philip of Orleans.
Charles II o.s.p. 1700. Last Habsburg King of Spain.
Maria Theresa m. Louis XIV.
Margaret Theresa=(1) Leopold.
(2) Claudia of Tyrol.
(3) Eleanor of Neuburg.
Eleanor=Charles IV of Lorraine.
Louis the Dauphin.
Louis, Duke of Burgundy ob. 1712.
Philip, First Bourbon King of Spain.
Joseph I m. Wilhelmina Amèlia of Brunswick.
Charles VI.
Leopold=Elizabeth Charlotte, d. of Philip of Orleans, niece of Louis XIV.
Louis XV m. Marie Leczinsky.
Maria Josepha m. Augustus of Poland and Saxony.
Maria Amèlia m. Charles VII.
Maria Theresa m. Francis Stephen of Lorraine.
Marianne m. Charles of Lorraine.
Francis Stephen.
Charles.
Elizabeth m. King of Sardinia.
Duke de Chablais.
Marie Louise m. Philip of Parma.
Louis the Dauphin=Maria Josepha.
Maria Amèlia m. Don Carlos of Two Sicilies, afterwards Charles III of Spain.
Louis XVI.
Count of Provence (Louis XVIII).
Count d'Artois (Charles X).
Marie Antoinette.
Duke of Angoulême=Marie Thérèse.

---

[1] Philip of Habsburg, known as Philip the Fair of Burgundy, heir of the Austrian Provinces, married Joanna, heiress of Ferdinand and Isabella, and thus became Philip I of Spain (died 1506).

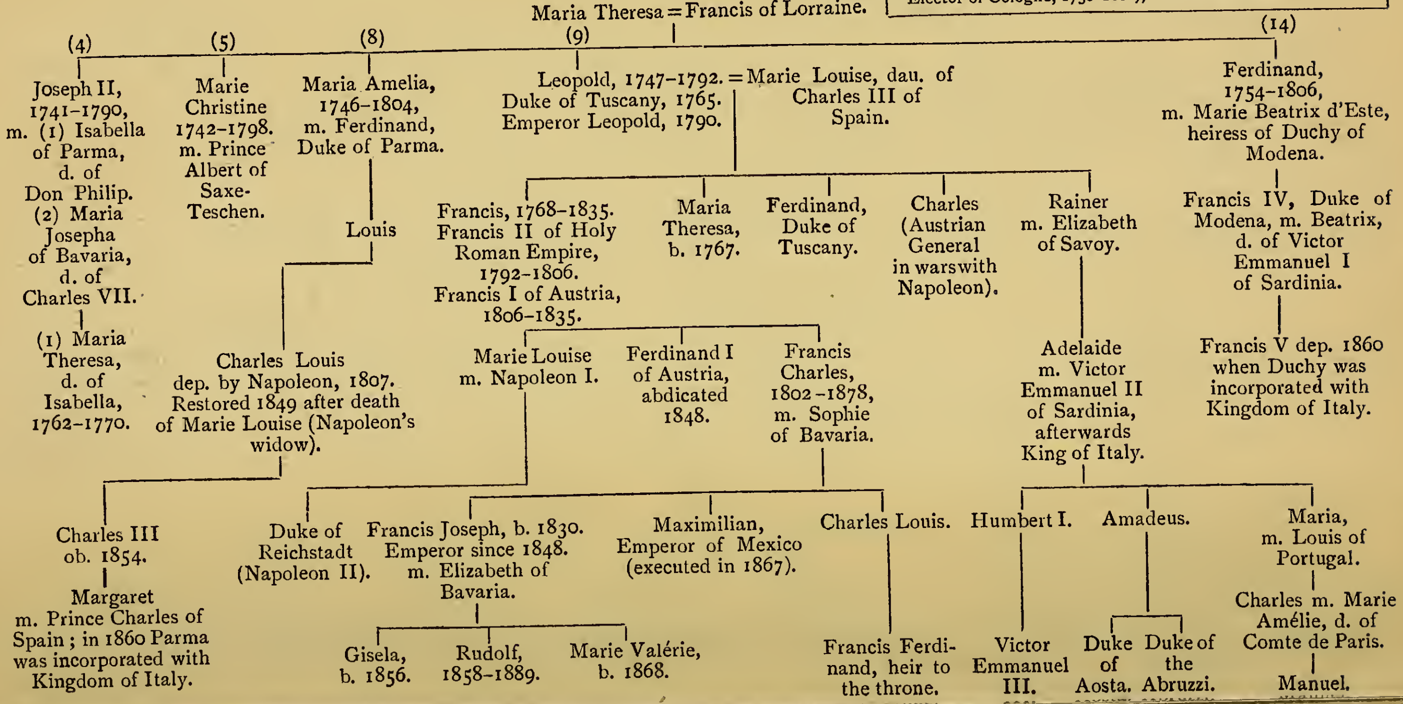
[2] Better known as the Emperor Charles V.

APPENDIX II

DESCENDANTS OF MARIA THERESA IN AUSTRIA, ITALY, PORTUGAL PARMA, AND MODENA

THE HABSBURG-LORRAINE BRANCH OF THE AUSTRIAN DYNASTY.

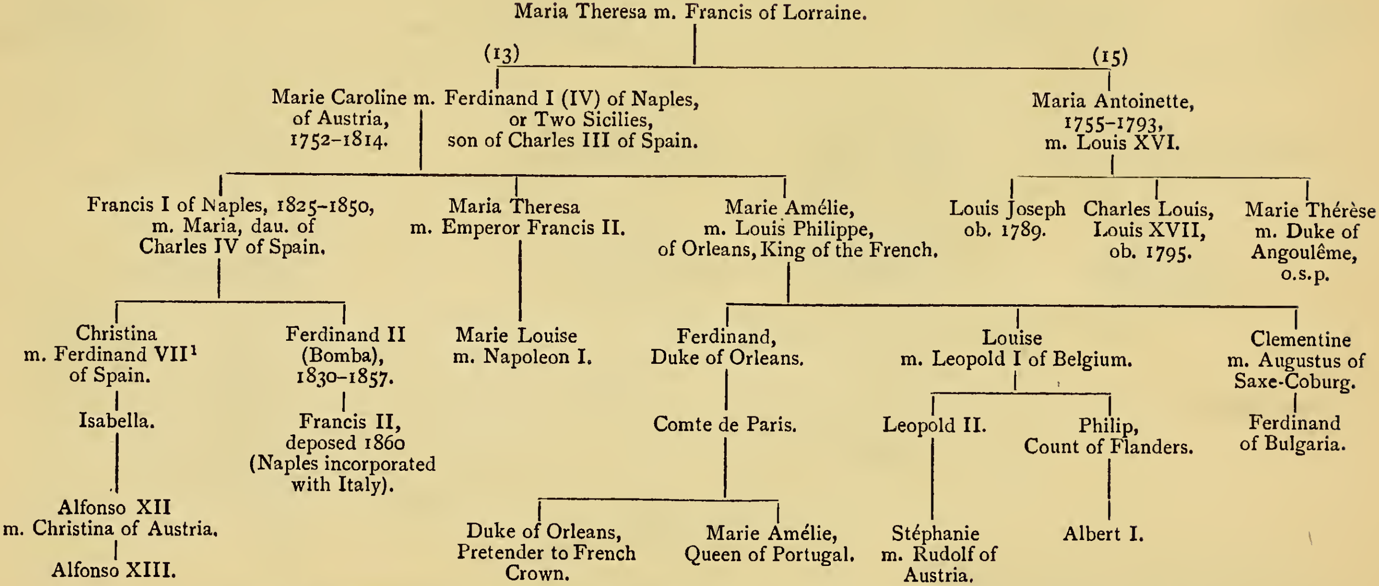
Of the sixteen children of Maria Theresa, the first, third, and tenth died in infancy. The seventh (Charles), the eleventh (Joanna), and the twelfth (Josepha) died in early youth. The second (Marianne, 1738–1787), the sixth (Elizabeth, 1743–1808), and the sixteenth (Maximilian, the last Elector of Cologne, 1756–1801), died unmarried.


Maria Theresa = Francis of Lorraine.
(4)
Joseph II, 1741–1790, m. (1) Isabella of Parma, d. of Don Philip. (2) Maria Josepha of Bavaria, d. of Charles VII.
(1) Maria Theresa, d. of Isabella, 1762–1770.
(5)
Marie Christine 1742–1798. m. Prince Albert of Saxe-Teschen.
(8)
Maria Amelia, 1746–1804, m. Ferdinand, Duke of Parma.
Louis
Charles Louis dep. by Napoleon, 1807. Restored 1849 after death of Marie Louise (Napoleon's widow).
Charles III ob. 1854.
Margaret m. Prince Charles of Spain; in 1860 Parma was incorporated with Kingdom of Italy.
(9)
Leopold, 1747–1792. = Marie Louise, dau. of Charles III of Spain.
Duke of Tuscany, 1765. Emperor Leopold, 1790.
Francis, 1768–1835. Francis II of Holy Roman Empire, 1792–1806. Francis I of Austria, 1806–1835.
Maria Theresa, b. 1767.
Ferdinand, Duke of Tuscany.
Charles (Austrian General in wars with Napoleon).
Rainer m. Elizabeth of Savoy.
Marie Louise m. Napoleon I.
Ferdinand I of Austria, abdicated 1848.
Francis Charles, 1802–1878, m. Sophie of Bavaria.
Adelaide m. Victor Emmanuel II of Sardinia, afterwards King of Italy.
Duke of Reichstadt (Napoleon II).
Francis Joseph, b. 1830. Emperor since 1848. m. Elizabeth of Bavaria.
Maximilian, Emperor of Mexico (executed in 1867).
Charles Louis.
Gisela, b. 1856.
Rudolf, 1858–1889.
Marie Valérie, b. 1868.
Francis Ferdinand, heir to the throne.
Humbert I.
Amadeus.
Maria, m. Louis of Portugal.
Victor Emmanuel III.
Duke of Aosta.
Duke of the Abruzzi.
Charles m. Marie Amélie, d. of Comte de Paris.
Manuel.
(14)
Ferdinand, 1754–1806, m. Marie Beatrix d'Este, heiress of Duchy of Modena.
Francis IV, Duke of Modena, m. Beatrix, d. of Victor Emmanuel I of Sardinia.
Francis V dep. 1860 when Duchy was incorporated with Kingdom of Italy.

APPENDIX III

THE HABSBURG-LORRAINE BRANCH OF THE AUSTRIAN DYNASTY (*continued*).

DESCENDANTS OF MARIA THERESA IN NAPLES, FRANCE, SPAIN, BELGIUM, AND BULGARIA


Maria Theresa m. Francis of Lorraine.
(13)
(15)
Marie Caroline of Austria, 1752–1814. m. Ferdinand I (IV) of Naples, or Two Sicilies, son of Charles III of Spain.
Maria Antoinette, 1755–1793, m. Louis XVI.
Francis I of Naples, 1825–1850, m. Maria, dau. of Charles IV of Spain.
Maria Theresa m. Emperor Francis II.
Marie Amélie, m. Louis Philippe, of Orleans, King of the French.
Louis Joseph ob. 1789.
Charles Louis, Louis XVII, ob. 1795.
Marie Thérèse m. Duke of Angoulême, o.s.p.
Christina m. Ferdinand VII[1] of Spain.
Ferdinand II (Bomba), 1830–1857.
Marie Louise m. Napoleon I.
Ferdinand, Duke of Orleans.
Louise m. Leopold I of Belgium.
Clementine m. Augustus of Saxe-Coburg.
Isabella.
Francis II, deposed 1860 (Naples incorporated with Italy).
Comte de Paris.
Leopold II.
Philip, Count of Flanders.
Ferdinand of Bulgaria.
Alfonso XII m. Christina of Austria.
Alfonso XIII.
Duke of Orleans, Pretender to French Crown.
Marie Amélie, Queen of Portugal.
Stéphanie m. Rudolf of Austria.
Albert I.

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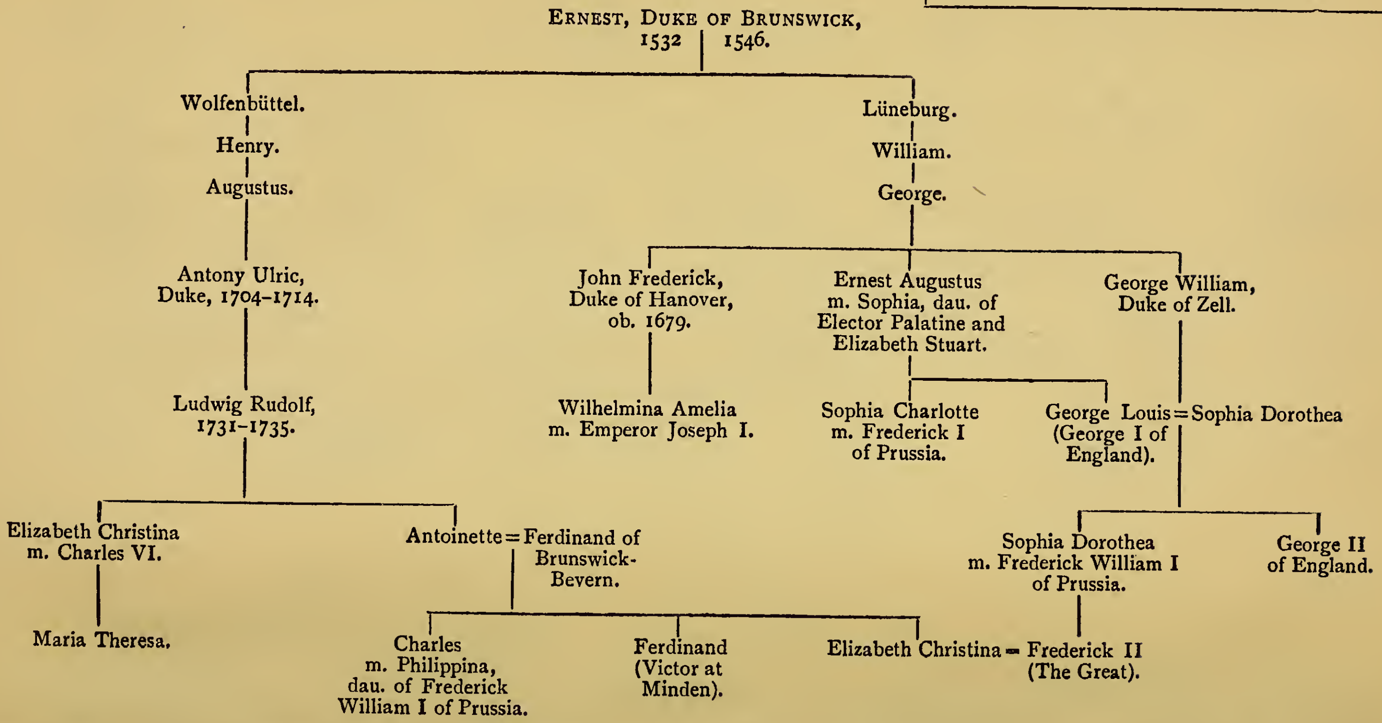
[1] Proclaimed on the resignation of his father, Charles IV, in 1808; set aside by Napoleon and replaced by Joseph Bonaparte till 1814.

APPENDIX IV

THE AUSTRIAN CONNECTION WITH THE HOUSE OF BRUNSWICK.


ERNEST, DUKE OF BRUNSWICK,
1532 | 1546.
Wolfenbüttel.
Henry.
Augustus.
Antony Ulric, Duke, 1704–1714.
Ludwig Rudolf, 1731–1735.
Elizabeth Christina m. Charles VI.
Maria Theresa.
Antoinette = Ferdinand of Brunswick-Bevern.
Charles m. Philippina, dau. of Frederick William I of Prussia.
Ferdinand (Victor at Minden).
Elizabeth Christina = Frederick II (The Great).
Lüneburg.
William.
George.
John Frederick, Duke of Hanover, ob. 1679.
Wilhelmina Amelia m. Emperor Joseph I.
Ernest Augustus m. Sophia, dau. of Elector Palatine and Elizabeth Stuart.
Sophia Charlotte m. Frederick I of Prussia.
George Louis (George I of England).
George William, Duke of Zell.
Sophia Dorothea
Sophia Dorothea m. Frederick William I of Prussia.
George II of England.

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